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# The Role of Shevardnadze and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Making of Soviet Defense and Arms Control Policy

John Van Oudenaren

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# **The Role of Shevardnadze and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Making of Soviet Defense and Arms Control Policy**

John Van Oudenaren

July 1990

Prepared for the  
Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

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## PREFACE

The RAND Corporation is providing analytical assistance to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy on the subject of recent developments in Soviet military affairs. This two-year effort seeks to identify and explain the major elements of continuity and change in Soviet military organization, concepts, and goals since the rise of President Gorbachev and his "new political thinking." It seeks to look beyond the rhetoric of *glasnost* and *perestroika* toward the underlying motivations that account for the many departures that have lately occurred in such areas as Soviet declaratory rhetoric, operational doctrine, national security decisionmaking, and defense resource allocation.

This report analyzes the influence of Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) on the formulation and implementation of Soviet national security policy. It discusses how Shevardnadze, a close Gorbachev adviser and member of the Defense Council, has evolved from a fairly traditional supporter of the Soviet defense establishment into one of its harshest critics. It discusses MFA-military differences in specific policy areas (e.g., doctrine and force reductions) and their implications for the military. The report thus examines both the new *procedures* by which the Soviet Union makes defense policy and the emerging *substance* of that policy.

The research reported here was conducted in the International Security and Defense Policy program of RAND's National Defense Research Institute, a federally funded research and development center sponsored by the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It should be of interest to members of the United States defense policy community concerned with evolving Soviet military policy, civilian-military relations, defense policy formulation, and arms control behavior.

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## SUMMARY

Since his surprise appointment in July 1985, Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze has emerged as Gorbachev's most important foreign policy adviser and an influential figure in internal debates on defense and arms control policy. He also has become increasingly critical of the Soviet military, which has resisted Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) intrusions into its domain.

Shevardnadze's influence on national security policy derives from three sources. First, he is a personal friend of and close political adviser to Gorbachev, with a political stature unmatched by any military officer or defense official. Second, the intense pace of Soviet diplomacy since 1985 has meant that power has gravitated to those individuals and bureaucracies directly involved in East-West negotiations. Third, Gorbachev's "new political thinking" downplays the importance of military power in international politics, and has been interpreted by Shevardnadze as a mandate to the MFA to monitor the actions of the military to ensure that they are consistent with the USSR's newly proclaimed international obligations.

Shevardnadze at first expressed rather traditional views. He supported a strong Soviet military posture and blamed the United States for most international problems. Initially, he did not call for radical changes either in the MFA or in Soviet foreign and defense policy. This situation began to change in May 1986, when Gorbachev gave an unusual speech to the MFA in which he demanded better performance from Soviet diplomats.

Although it was later reported that Gorbachev's speech contained strong criticism of the military, until well into 1987 both Gorbachev and Shevardnadze refrained from speaking out publicly. Their reticence was the result of two factors: the internal political situation was still unsettled; and both men were concerned with what they saw as an international perception that the Soviet Union was weak and could therefore be forced to make concessions in its dealings with the West. Shevardnadze thus tended to see military power as more an asset than a liability, and was wary of accusing the Soviet military of incompetence in its own domain.

These factors began to change in late 1986 and the first half of 1987. Gorbachev exerted increasing control over the military, especially after the Rust affair in May 1987. The Soviet leaders also became less concerned (after Reykjavik, the Iran-Contra affair, and other developments) about appearing weak in American eyes. Above all, the Soviet

economic situation continued to deteriorate, creating pressing reasons for cuts in military spending and a more flexible foreign policy.

By the end of 1987, MFA spokesmen were beginning to criticize many aspects of Soviet military policy. Shevardnadze spoke out personally in July 1988 with a sweeping critique of Soviet strategy and military policy since World War II. Subsequent speeches and articles in MFA-controlled publications pointed to significant MFA-military differences in several areas.

- *Doctrine.* Shevardnadze was an early proponent of "reasonable sufficiency" in both the nuclear and conventional fields, while the military initially tried to deprive this concept of operational significance or confine it to the nuclear balance. Shevardnadze also argued that quantitative superiority is of little significance in contemporary warfare, while some in the military remained skeptical of this view.
- *Force reductions.* Shevardnadze called for rapid progress toward conventional, chemical and nuclear disarmament, while the military was more cautious about certain proposed agreements. Shevardnadze concluded in particular that the 1987 INF Treaty was asymmetrically beneficial to the USSR, in that it removed an American threat to the USSR for which there was no Soviet counterpart.
- *Secrecy.* To promote Soviet international initiatives, Shevardnadze wanted the Soviet Union to publish more data about its defense budget and force levels. The military resisted, and favored an approach to budgeting that hides much of the real cost of maintaining and equipping the armed forces.
- *Verification and new security institutions.* Shevardnadze supported extensive East-West and U.S.-Soviet cooperation on verification, and the establishment of institutions such as risk reduction and crisis management centers. The military partly shared the MFA agenda, but expressed concern about maintaining secrecy and its own freedom of action.
- *Nationality and internal order problems.* Shevardnadze took a rather moderate line on nationality problems, and came into conflict with the military over the causes of the April 1989 massacre in Tbilisi.

Most of these conflicts were simmering below the surface already in 1986 and 1987, but burst into public view mainly in 1988 and continued into 1989. With the revolutions in Eastern Europe in the second half of 1989, the terms of the debate tended to shift, as both the MFA

and the military adjusted their positions on various issues in response to the changed geopolitical circumstances. Shevardnadze shifted his position somewhat on European issues, for example, by downplaying his earlier campaign for the dissolution of the blocs and the elimination of foreign military bases. But he also came under severe attack from many in the Soviet Union who blamed him for the "loss" of Eastern Europe and the impending reunification of Germany.

MFA-military differences will be important to U.S. policymakers for two reasons. First, they raise questions regarding compliance with and the possible reversibility of many of the steps taken by the Soviet military. As yet there is little evidence of Bonapartism or military insubordination in the Soviet Union. However reluctantly, the generals obey the civilian leadership. Nonetheless, in circumstances in which the Soviet military is being forced to take steps that it strongly opposes, the possibility cannot be excluded that it may violate the letter or the spirit of the policies instituted by the civilian leadership. This possibility would seem to be particularly relevant to the full implementation of the new declaratory doctrine (defensive restructuring), the provision of information, and compliance with difficult-to-verify arms control agreements.

Second, the unpopularity among the military of many of the policies favored by Shevardnadze and the MFA means that their continuation will depend very much on the political fortunes of Gorbachev. As has been seen, Shevardnadze has been careful to align his views closely to those of Gorbachev. Each radical step forward in the MFA's articulation of a new Soviet foreign and defense policy and each escalation of MFA-military conflict has followed a Gorbachev-inspired event: the May 1986 speech to the MFA, the June 1987 plenum, the June 1988 party conference, and the December 1988 speech to the UN General Assembly. After each of these events, Shevardnadze has used MFA conferences, his own speeches and interviews, and controversial articles in MFA-controlled journals to associate himself with Gorbachev's latest initiatives, and also to push slightly beyond the limits of what Gorbachev himself declared and possibly intended.

If Gorbachev is forced to rein in his reform program, Shevardnadze will have no choice but to follow suit. Similarly, if Gorbachev were removed from office, Shevardnadze probably would have great difficulty retaining his position. Thus, over the long run, Soviet foreign and defense policy is likely to be determined as much by domestic developments and the fate of *perestroika* as by the evolution of Shevardnadze's views on the international system and the requirements of Soviet security.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The dramatic changes in Soviet domestic and foreign policy under Gorbachev have focused attention in the West on decisionmaking within the Soviet leadership. In analyzing the emergence and implications of such concepts as "reasonable sufficiency" and "defensive defense," Western scholars have placed great emphasis on the new brand of Soviet civilian defense analysts, who are seen as challenging the monopoly of the uniformed military on defense information and decisionmaking.<sup>1</sup> Scholars also have paid considerable attention to Politburo member Aleksandr Yakovlev and his purported anti-Americanism and interest in a "multipolar" foreign policy.<sup>2</sup> In contrast, Western writers have devoted relatively little attention to the role of Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) as forces for change in Soviet policy.<sup>3</sup>

In an attempt to remedy this deficiency, this report focuses on the influence of Shevardnadze. It argues that the Soviet foreign minister is, after Gorbachev, not only the most important decisionmaker in Soviet foreign policy, but has an increasingly powerful voice in Soviet defense and arms control policy as well. The Soviet military has resisted Shevardnadze's intrusions into its domain, both on procedural grounds and because it rejects the substance of his positions on many issues. For the most part, however, it has failed to avert the decline of its power relative to the MFA.

Shevardnadze's influence on Soviet national security policy derives from three sources. First, he is a personal friend of and political adviser to Gorbachev, not only on foreign and national security policy, but on domestic matters as well. As a former first secretary of the Georgian party organization whose personal links to Gorbachev go

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<sup>1</sup>For a discussion of the civilian analysts, see Benjamin Lambeth, *Is Soviet Defense Policy Becoming Civilianized?*, The RAND Corporation, R-3939-USDP, forthcoming.

<sup>2</sup>The most persistent Western proponent of the concept of a "Yakovlev line" in Soviet foreign policy is Jerry Hough. See Chapter 9 of his *Russia and the West: Gorbachev and the Politics of Reform*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1988. See also Bill Keller, "Moscow's Other Mastermind," *The New York Times Magazine*, February 19, 1989.

<sup>3</sup>Some attention is paid to Shevardnadze in Bruce Parrott, "Soviet National Security Under Gorbachev," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 37, No. 6 (1988); and Allen Lynch, "Gorbachev's International Outlook: Intellectual Origins and Political Consequences," Occasional Paper 9, Institute for East-West Security Studies, New York, 1989, pp. 30, 53, 55. See also John Kohan, "The Boss of Smolensky Square," *Time*, May 15, 1989.

back nearly 30 years.<sup>4</sup> Shevardnadze has a political stature unmatched by any military officer or defense official. As foreign minister, he is ex officio a member of and undoubtedly Gorbachev's closest ally on the Defense Council. He also became a member of the Presidential Council that was set up by Gorbachev in March 1990 and that has partially superseded the Defense Council. Shevardnadze left the Politburo in July 1990, after its importance was downgraded by the decisions of the 28th communist party congress. Previously, he had been its only non-Slavic member, and for a time he was the only member, besides Prime Minister Ryzhkov, to also serve on the Council of Ministers.<sup>5</sup>

Second, the intense pace of Soviet diplomacy since 1985 has tended to shift power to those individuals, notably Gorbachev himself and Shevardnadze, who are in continual contact with foreign leaders. Shevardnadze had 31 meetings with U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, and was present at Gorbachev's five meetings with President Reagan. The pace of Soviet-American interaction slowed considerably after President Bush's inauguration in January 1989, but accelerated in 1990 and remains at historically high levels. In conducting policy at this pace and level, Gorbachev, Shevardnadze and a few other officials in their entourage have become repositories of information about their negotiating counterparts. The Soviet military, whose interests are discussed at these meetings, is at a disadvantage as it tries to influence position papers and perhaps even learn the details of conversations. The imbalance between the stepped-up activism of the MFA and the background role of the military has been redressed only partially by the participation of Soviet defense officials in high-level U.S.-Soviet meetings, and the opening of a direct U.S.-Soviet military and defense dialogue.

In the European context, developments in arms control and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) process also tended to enhance MFA influence over military matters. Gorbachev made CSCE and the "all-European process" the centerpiece of his campaign to create a "common European home." The management of this "process" involves balancing and trading off Soviet interests in the three baskets of CSCE: security, economics, and human rights. Although Soviet military officers are assigned to the two CSCE-related arms control forums in Vienna, only the MFA is in a position to play a

<sup>4</sup>Hough emphasizes that Gorbachev and Shevardnadze were ranking officials in adjoining parts of the Soviet Union. See *Russia and the West*, p. 224. The two also served together as high Komsomol officials.

<sup>5</sup>This point was made by Ernst Kux, "New Momentum for Moscow's Diplomacy," *Swiss Review of World Affairs*, May 1989, p. 19.

coordinating role with regard to all aspects of CSCE.<sup>6</sup> As in the American case, frequent meetings with influential West European foreign ministers such as West Germany's Hans-Dietrich Genscher and France's Roland Dumas also tended to enhance the centrality of Shevardnadze and the MFA.

Third, Gorbachev's "new thinking," in addition to being partly the result of Shevardnadze's role, was a further source of power for him and his ministry. Backed by a doctrinal line that downplays the importance of military power in international politics, by mid-1988 Shevardnadze had great latitude to make proposals affecting the Soviet armed forces, but about which many military officers clearly were unenthusiastic. As will be seen, Shevardnadze interpreted Gorbachev's proclamation of such concepts as "reasonable sufficiency" as in effect a mandate to the MFA to monitor the actions of the military and ensure that they are consistent with the USSR's international commitments. Subsequently, however, Shevardnadze's very close identification with the "new thinking" made him a target of criticism by those in the Soviet Union, including in the military, who were most upset by the loss of Communist hegemony in Eastern Europe and the pending reunification of Germany.

The organization of the report is as follows. Section II briefly reviews the traditional role of the foreign minister in the Soviet political system, and the evolution of Shevardnadze's own relationship to the military during his early years in office. Some reference to these background factors is necessary, in light of the rapid and in some ways difficult-to-explain transformation of Shevardnadze from a rather dogmatic official who was generally supportive of a strong defense posture into one of the most daring of the "new thinkers" with a penchant for attacking the military. Section III examines the issues on which Shevardnadze challenged the military in his first four years as foreign minister, and which continue to play a role in MFA-military disputes. Section IV examines Shevardnadze's role in and response to the 1989 revolutions in Eastern Europe and the collapse of the East German state and their effect on his relations with the military. Section V deals with the future of MFA-military relations in the new Soviet political system. A final section draws conclusions and discusses implications for U.S. policy.

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<sup>6</sup>To enhance its ability to play this role, in early 1989 the MFA set up an intradepartmental Commission for the Coordination of Questions Relating to the All-European Process. *Vestnik Ministerstva Inostrannykh Del SSSR* (hereinafter abbreviated as *Vestnik MID*), No. 5, 1989.

## II. THE CHANGING BALANCE OF POWER

### THE ROLE OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER

The minister of foreign affairs traditionally has occupied an ambiguous position in the Soviet hierarchy. According to the 1977 constitution, the ministry is responsible to the Council of Ministers of the USSR, which in turn is accountable to the Supreme Soviet (or, in the time between sessions of the Supreme Soviet, to its Presidium).<sup>1</sup> In reality, however, the foreign minister always took orders directly from the party, and in particular the Politburo. This was confirmed by Andrei Gromyko at the 1971 24th party congress, at which he stated that the Politburo was "constantly and deeply involved in questions of foreign policy, guaranteeing timeliness and farsightedness in the taking of decisions."<sup>2</sup> Shevardnadze made essentially the same claim in his speech to the 1986 27th party congress.<sup>3</sup>

In view of the leading role of the party, Soviet foreign ministers derived their power not from their control of the ministry, but from their base in the party. Accordingly, since the October revolution Soviet foreign ministers generally have fallen into one of two categories. In one group were those, notably Chicherin, Litvinov and, at the time of his appointment, Gromyko, who had relatively little political power but were chosen for their professional skill.<sup>4</sup> In the second category were those, notably Trotsky, Molotov, and to some extent Shepilov, who enjoyed a certain stature in the party or had close personal ties with the top political leadership.<sup>5</sup> Shevardnadze clearly belongs to the second group. Indeed, in his closeness to Gorbachev he recalls Molotov, who as Stalin's closest political confidante gave the MFA added stature in the Soviet Union and abroad.

<sup>1</sup>Articles 130, 131.

<sup>2</sup>XXIV S'ezd KPSS: *Stenograficheskiy otchet*, Politizdat, Moscow, 1971, Vol. 1, p. 486.

<sup>3</sup>*Pravda*, March 2, 1986.

<sup>4</sup>For Chicherin, see Theodore H. Von Laue, "Soviet Diplomacy: G. V. Chicherin, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, 1918-1930," in Gordon A. Craig and Felix Gilbert (eds.), *The Diplomats, 1919-1939*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1953, pp. 234-281; for Litvinov, see Henry L. Roberts, "Maxim Litvinov," in the same work, p. 374.

<sup>5</sup>For Trotsky as the first People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, see E. H. Carr, *The Bolshevik Revolution 1917-1923*, Pelican Books, London, 1966, Vol. 3, pp. 33-42. On Molotov's influence, see Andrei A. Gromyko, *Pamiatnoe*, Politizdat, Moscow, 1988, Vol. 2, p. 325. For Shepilov, see the account of the former Yugoslav ambassador to the Soviet Union, Veljko Micunovic, *Moscow Diary*, Doubleday, Garden City, 1980.

If Shevardnadze's political position in some respects resembles that of Molotov, the bureaucracy and policies that he inherited are very much the product of Gromyko, a Molotov protégé who held the post for 28 years before stepping down in 1985.<sup>6</sup> Gromyko was an adviser to Stalin at Yalta and Potsdam and a deputy foreign minister, as well as ambassador to the United States, the United Nations, and Britain. He was elected a candidate member of the Central Committee at the 1952 19th party congress, and elevated to full membership in 1956. Although he had no domestic political base and on occasion was made the butt of Khrushchev's jokes with foreign leaders, he became increasingly valuable to the top leadership.<sup>7</sup> The MFA was the only ministry that reported directly to the Politburo,<sup>8</sup> and over time Gromyko was able to parlay this direct subordination into a close political relationship with Brezhnev.<sup>9</sup> In April 1973 he became a full member of the Politburo (bypassing candidate status), along with Defense Minister Grechko and KGB head Andropov.

Gromyko's elevation to the Politburo did not in itself increase the weight of the MFA relative to the military, since it occurred during the Soviet military's "golden age" under Brezhnev,<sup>10</sup> and was counterbalanced by Grechko's promotion.<sup>11</sup> In any case, questions concerning the relative balance between the two ministries at this time are somewhat academic, since there was little evidence of substantive differences over policy. According to Gromyko, he and Grechko had an excellent working relationship: "Hardly a day passed when we did not discuss some problem where defence and foreign policy overlapped. As a result, our proposals

<sup>6</sup>For a brief overview of Gromyko's career, see the obituary by Craig Whitney, *New York Times*, July 4, 1989.

<sup>7</sup>Khrushchev once told a group of foreign ambassadors: "If I tell my foreign minister to sit on a block of ice and stay there for months, he will do it without back talk."

<sup>8</sup>According to a defector with experience in the MFA, proposals on matters of foreign policy, which almost always were initiated in the ministry, were directly submitted to the Politburo in the form of memoranda. Arkady N. Shevchenko, *Breaking with Moscow*, Knopf, New York, 1985, p. 187.

<sup>9</sup>Considerations of international political prestige also may have played a role in Gromyko's promotion. He was elected to the Politburo shortly before attending the stage one of the CSCE, which opened in Helsinki at the ministerial level.

<sup>10</sup>For a discussion of this period, see Jeremy R. Azrael, *The Soviet Civilian Leadership and the High Command: 1976-1986*, The RAND Corporation, R-3521-AF, June 1987, pp. 1-4.

<sup>11</sup>Dusko Dodor has claimed that Brezhnev tried to dilute military authority over arms control policy by creating a Politburo committee on arms control that he chaired and that included Gromyko, Andropov and Grechko. *Shadows and Whispers*, Random House, New York, 1986, p. 221. The existence of such a committee has not been confirmed in other sources.

were commonly submitted to the Politburo over both our signatures, and Brezhnev gave his support to our work."<sup>12</sup>

However, as the golden age began to wane in the late Brezhnev period, Gromyko's influence continued to increase while the military's went into a gradual decline. Dmitrii Ustinov was promoted to full membership in the Politburo at the 26th party congress in March 1976, and became defense minister a little more than a month later upon the death of Grechko. Ustinov was a defense industrialist with close ties to the military; but he was not a uniformed officer, and his subsequent appointment to the rank of marshal may have occasioned resentment in the armed forces.<sup>13</sup>

After Ustinov's death in December 1984, his replacement at the Defense Ministry, Sergei Sokolov, was not elected to the Politburo. Gromyko, in contrast, became a first deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers in 1983 and played a key role in the selection of Gorbachev following Chernenko's death.<sup>14</sup> The decline of the military relative to the MFA thus predated by many years—and possibly as much as a decade—Gorbachev's accession to power in March 1985.

#### CHANGE SINCE 1985

Shevardnadze was appointed minister of foreign affairs on July 2, 1985, one day after he was elected to the Politburo, of which he had been a candidate member since 1976.<sup>15</sup> Clearly a surprise choice both abroad and in the Soviet Union, he had no previous foreign policy experience. Initially he appeared to be overwhelmed by the assignment but, by working very long hours and relying on the professional MFA bureaucracy, managed to master his brief within a few months and increasingly to impress his foreign interlocutors.<sup>16</sup>

Shevardnadze's early pronouncements on international issues were by no means conciliatory, and gave no hint of the strongly antimilitary

<sup>12</sup>Gromyko, *Memories*, Hutchinson, London, 1989, p. 168, translated by Harold Shukman. This would seem to run counter to Shevchenko's claim that the MFA alone reported directly to the Politburo. "Politburo" in Gromyko's book may be a euphemism for Defense Council, which until recently was rarely mentioned in Soviet writings.

<sup>13</sup>See Doder, *Shadows and Whispers*, p. 221.

<sup>14</sup>Michel Tatu, *Gorbachev: L'URSS—va-t-elle changer?* Centurion, Paris, 1988, pp. 112-115.

<sup>15</sup>Gromyko remained on the Politburo, but was transferred to the largely honorific governmental post of president of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet, the Soviet head of state. He left the Politburo in October 1988, when Gorbachev assumed the presidency, and resigned from the Central Committee at the April 1989 special plenum.

<sup>16</sup>Philip Taubman, "Shevardnadze Is Seen as Growing Fast in His Job," *New York Times*, April 13, 1987.

posture he was to adopt in mid-1988. In his speech to the CSCE anniversary meeting in Helsinki (in many ways his debut on the international scene) he warned that attempts to deal with the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact from a "position of strength" were "illusory," and that "efforts to upset the existing military balance and gain unilateral advantages will continue to meet effective counteraction from our part."<sup>17</sup> In his speech to the UN General Assembly in New York the following month he also reiterated standard Soviet positions on most issues. He made the traditional Soviet appeal to the nonaligned group and blamed the United States for violence and poverty in the Third World. Above all, he stressed the positive role of Soviet economic and military power and rejected the suggestion that the United States and the Soviet Union were morally equivalent in their accumulation and use of power:

Those who invoke the concept of the "two superpowers" would be well advised to ponder once in a while what would happen to their independence and what turn world developments would take if the USSR were weaker than it is and if the Soviet people were not investing so much of their effort, material resources and scientific endeavor in maintaining its economic and military potential at an adequate level.<sup>18</sup>

The major theme of Shevardnadze's speech was an attack on the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) as a prelude to the introduction of the USSR's own "star peace" proposal. Shevardnadze implicitly defended stable mutual deterrence, at least as a temporary state of affairs, and criticized the United States for allegedly attempting to achieve the capability for a "disarming first strike."

Another indicator of Shevardnadze's early views on international issues came in November 1985, during meetings with U.S. Secretary of State Shultz to prepare for the upcoming U.S.-Soviet summit in Geneva. According to accounts by the American side, the meetings went rather badly. In a session that American participants described as "frank and argumentative," Gorbachev attacked the U.S. "military-industrial complex" that he claimed dominated American policy. Shevardnadze was described as more relaxed than Gorbachev, but espousing similar views.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup>*Pravda*, July 31, 1985.

<sup>18</sup>TASS, September 24, 1985, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Soviet Union* (hereinafter, FBIS-SU), September 25, 1985.

<sup>19</sup>See Bernard Gwertzman, "Shultz Reports Scanty Results in Soviet Talks," *New York Times*, November 6, 1985; idem., "U.S. Aides Doubt Success at Summit," *New York Times*, November 7, 1985. Another indication of Soviet toughness was the handling of the Yurchenko affair while Shultz was in Moscow; see Serge Schmemmann, "Soviet Press Is Publicizing Defector's Return to Fold," *New York Times*, November 6, 1985.



Although the atmosphere improved after the summit later in the month, Shevardnadze remained very critical of the United States and fairly conventional in his thinking. In his speech to the 27th party congress in early 1986 he sharply attacked U.S. policies, going as far as to criticize President Reagan by name, implying that he was "an uninformed person" and "behind the times" for believing that it was possible to talk to the Soviet Union from a "position of strength."<sup>20</sup> He also was supportive of the military, notably when he claimed (referring to the challenge of SDI) that the Soviet Union could "create everything that will be necessary to ensure its own security and the defense of its allies and friends." The following month, Shevardnadze gave an important speech on the anniversary of Lenin's birth, and again took a hard line on military issues: "We will not allow military-strategic parity, which guarantees our security and the security of our allies and friends, or peace throughout the world to be broken."<sup>21</sup>

It is noteworthy that at this time the "old thinking" Gromyko was much more moderate in his approach to international issues. For example, in his speech to the 1986 party congress he stated that the United States and the Soviet Union "are both mighty powers with worldwide interests" and claimed that Washington should view this not as a "source of confrontation" but as the basis for their "special responsibility" for world security.<sup>22</sup>

Within the foreign ministry, Shevardnadze first made his influence felt in personnel matters. In his first year as minister, he replaced the two first deputy foreign ministers, Georgii Kornienko and Viktor Maltsev, with younger men, Yuli Vorontsov and Anatolii Kovalev, both of whom had extensive experience in East-West affairs. Four other career diplomats, Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, Vladimir Petrovskii, Anatolii Adamishin, and Boris Chaplin, were promoted to deputy foreign minister. The ambassadors to the major Western countries, including the United States, Britain, France, West Germany, Japan, and Spain (and the United Nations) also were changed. It is unclear, however, to what extent Shevardnadze was able to staff key positions with individuals he knew personally or regarded as protégés. Some of his ambassadorial appointments were Brezhnev holdovers, and the Central Committee rather than the Foreign Ministry remained in charge of selecting ambassadors to East European and other Communist countries.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup>*Pravda*, March 2, 1986.

<sup>21</sup>*Pravda*, April 23, 1986.

<sup>22</sup>*Pravda*, March 2, 1986.

<sup>23</sup>See Leonid Mlechin, "A New Relationship Is Needed," *New Times*, No. 8, 1990.

In this early period, Shevardnadze gave little public indication that he was dissatisfied with the overall performance of the MFA. In his speech to the party congress he praised the quality of Soviet foreign policy, which he characterized as "the result of the people's collective efforts,"<sup>24</sup> and only hinted at the strong criticism of the Soviet foreign policy apparatus that was to emerge in his later statements: "Foreign-policy institutions cannot be some sort of protected zone that is closed to criticism and self-criticism—especially since they too have their problems and their untapped potential, above all with respect to increasing their activism and dynamism. . . ."

However, a little more than two months after the party congress Shevardnadze began to express a much more critical view of the MFA's performance. The impetus to a new evaluation appears to have come from Gorbachev himself who, in an unprecedented gesture, came to the ministry on May 23 to address a closed meeting of MFA officials and ambassadors, many of whom had returned to Moscow to attend. According to a brief TASS report, the conference was devoted to the subject of "implementing the decisions of the CPSU Congress in the field of foreign policy."<sup>25</sup> No other details of the conference were made public, but it was rumored that its convening reflected dissatisfaction on Gorbachev's part with the performance of Soviet diplomacy, and in particular a concern that foreign audiences were not responding favorably enough to his recent initiatives, notably his January 15 plan for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons by the year 2000.<sup>26</sup> Diplomats in Moscow were told that Gorbachev made three main points: (1) the world was characterized by growing interdependence, (2) the Soviet leadership considered its arms control proposals to be serious and expected Soviet negotiators to work to implement them, and (3) the MFA itself was not immune to restructuring.<sup>27</sup>

These reports were confirmed more than a year later, when a summary of the speech was published in an MFA publication. Much of what Gorbachev had to say was directed at Soviet diplomats as individuals, who he stressed had to modernize and improve the quality of their

<sup>24</sup>*Pravda*, March 2, 1986.

<sup>25</sup>TASS, May 23, 1986, in FBIS-SU, May 27, 1986. See also the interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Petrovskii, *La Repubblica*, June 17, 1986, in FBIS-SU, June 24, 1986.

<sup>26</sup>"Diplomats Hear Critical Speech by Gorbachev," *Los Angeles Times*, May 25, 1986; and Serge Schmemmann, "Gorbachev Gives Critique of Soviet Foreign Policy," *New York Times*, May 24, 1986.

<sup>27</sup>Charles Glickham, "New Directions for Soviet Foreign Policy," RFE/RL, *Radio Liberty Research*, September 6, 1986.

work and "live the same life as the rest of the country."<sup>28</sup> But Gorbachev also dwelt at length on the substance of Soviet policy, conveying a mixed message that reflected the underlying complexities of his policies.

On the one hand, Gorbachev was surprisingly militant. (This may explain in part why a verbatim text of the speech has not been published.) He argued that the West would "not balk at any means of disrupting our peace offensive" and called for a "truly dynamic, effective, combative diplomacy" to counter Western resistance. Speaking of the implementation of the congress decisions regarding a new system of international security, he stressed that "the struggle will be a difficult one. . . . The militaristic circles will not volunteer to stop the arms race." The emphasis on difficulty and long-term struggle was consistent with his remarks at the 27th party congress, in which he criticized past Soviet policy and claimed that "it is not possible to solve the problem of international security with one or two even very intensive peace offensives. Only consistent, systematic and persistent work can bring success."<sup>29</sup>

On the other hand, Gorbachev demanded new flexibility in Soviet diplomacy, and if necessary the granting of concessions to produce results in negotiations. He praised the Soviet movement away from "dogmatic positions with respect to the EC [European Community]," called for efforts to anticipate the negotiating positions of other countries, and argued that "we must not allow persistence in defending a particular position to develop into senseless stubbornness, so that the Soviet representatives will be called 'Mister Nyet.'" In effect Gorbachev was giving the MFA a difficult and in some ways self-contradictory assignment: it was not to abandon or compromise his vision of a nuclear-free world and a comprehensive system of security, but it was to make progress toward implementation of that vision, if need be through compromise and concessions.

Although it was not recognized in the West at the time, in retrospect it is clear that Gorbachev's May speech was a turning point in the evolution of his foreign and defense policy and a milestone in the ongoing shift of power from the military to the MFA. More than two years later, Shevardnadze revealed that the speech contained strong implied criticisms of the Soviet military. It exposed as untrue "the tenet, one that has established itself in the hearts and minds of some strategists, that the Soviet Union can be just as strong as any possible

<sup>28</sup> *Vestnik MID*, No. 1, 1987.

<sup>29</sup> *Pravda*, February 26, 1986.

coalition of states opposing it. . . ."<sup>30</sup> This view ran directly counter to the claim by Ogarkov and others that the Soviet Union was facing an increasingly united U.S.-led bloc that included NATO, Japan, and China.<sup>31</sup> It is noteworthy, however, that these criticisms of Soviet "strategists" were not made public, either in the very sparse accounts of the speech that circulated in May 1986, or in the detailed summary that appeared in mid-1987.

The reluctance on the part of Gorbachev and Shevardnadze to go public with their criticisms of the military at this time probably was the result of two factors. First, a policy battle was being waged in the Defense Council, and Gorbachev may have been somewhat cowed by the military and its supporters in the party hierarchy. As he revealed in a 1989 speech to the Supreme Soviet, his early sessions with the Defense Council were "very painful" and marked by conflict with the marshals.<sup>32</sup>

A second probable reason for the unwillingness of Gorbachev and Shevardnadze to criticize the military was their perception of the international situation. Until well into his term as general secretary, Gorbachev gave frequent indications that he was seriously concerned about what he saw as a perception in the West and especially the United States that the Soviet Union was weak and therefore could be forced to make major concessions on issues such as SDI. In September 1985, for example, he told an American audience that his upcoming summit meeting with President Reagan was "designed for negotiations, for negotiations on the basis of equality and not for signing an act of someone's capitulation. This is all the more true since we have not lost a war to the U.S., or even a battle, and we owe it absolutely nothing."<sup>33</sup> Shevardnadze struck a similarly defensive note in his speech to the UN General Assembly in the same month: "Our country will not permit military superiority over itself. . . . Profoundly mistaken are those who may expect that the Soviet economy will fail to withstand the strain of a qualitatively new stage in the arms race which is currently being forced upon us."<sup>34</sup> Gorbachev and Shevardnadze continued to make these kinds of statements, both publicly and in private,

<sup>30</sup>*International Affairs* (hereinafter, *IA*), No. 10, 1988, p. 18.

<sup>31</sup>See Ogarkov's "In the Interest of Raising Military Preparedness," *Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil*, No. 14, July 1980, quoted in Azrael, *The Soviet Civilian Leadership and the Military High Command, 1976-1986*, p. 18.

<sup>32</sup>Paul Quinn-Judge, "Gorbachev Hints at Troubles in the Military," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 12, 1989. This report was based on accounts of Gorbachev's speech that circulated in Moscow, but that did not appear on Soviet television or in the press.

<sup>33</sup>*Time*, September 9, 1985.

<sup>34</sup>TASS, September 24, 1985, in FBIS-SU, September 25, 1985.

until well into 1986. As late as May 1986—at the height of the Chernobyl crisis—Gorbachev reportedly complained to Spanish Prime Minister Gonzalez that “in the United States the idea prevails that Gorbachev wants a respite in order to establish domestic order. Well, no, we will not accept charity from the United States. They are deluded.”<sup>35</sup> In this period, the Soviet military still was seen very much as an asset rather than a hindrance in the restoration of the USSR’s international positions.<sup>36</sup>

If domestic infighting and international uncertainty accounted for the initial reluctance of Gorbachev and Shevardnadze to attack the military, the gradual disappearance of these two factors inevitably led to a more critical posture, as did a growing perception of the Soviet Union’s economic difficulties. With the Rust affair in May 1987 and the ensuing shakeup in the military leadership, Gorbachev began to win the battle to assert control over the marshals. At the same time, the political leadership’s perception of the American threat began to change. Accordingly, both Gorbachev and Shevardnadze saw less need to stress the positive aspects of Soviet military power and were more inclined to portray the military as an obstacle to foreign policy breakthroughs.

The change in the leadership’s view of the American threat appears to date from the summer and fall of 1986. Its causes are difficult to pin down, but probably included the Daniloff affair,<sup>37</sup> the Reykjavik summit, the 1986 congressional elections (in which the Republicans lost control of the Senate), and the Iran-Contra affair that began in November 1986 and was widely seen as weakening the American president’s position at home and in the Western alliance.

Already in his September 1986 speech to the UN General Assembly, Shevardnadze took a loftier, more detached view of the American challenge. He claimed that to respond point by point to President Reagan’s speech of the previous day “presents no problem,” but that he would not enter into polemics. He did not reiterate Soviet determination to match

<sup>35</sup>The transcript of the Gorbachev-Gonzalez talks was leaked and appeared in *Cambio* 16, December 15, 1986.

<sup>36</sup>There is no contradiction between the claim that Gorbachev was in conflict with the military and very concerned about the American threat. His differences with the military were not about the seriousness of the threat, but about the military’s effectiveness. As he told the Supreme Soviet in 1989, in 1985 the military was scarcely able to guarantee the country’s security and the situation surrounding the armed forces was “fraught with danger.” See Quinn-Judge, “Gorbachev Hints at Troubles in the Military,” *Christian Science Monitor*, July 12, 1989. The civilian leadership probably differed with at least some in the military about the imminence of the threat from the West as well.

<sup>37</sup>For Shevardnadze’s role in the affair, see Donald T. Regan, *For the Record*, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, San Diego, 1988, pp. 337–342.

American military efforts, but instead stressed the new themes in Soviet policy: the nuclear-free world and a comprehensive system of international security.<sup>38</sup>

The change after the Reykjavik summit was even more dramatic. At the opening session of the Vienna CSCE review conference, Shevardnadze delivered a strong attack on American policy, but "paid his due to the American president" who he claimed (in accordance with the Soviet interpretation of what had happened at Reykjavik) had agreed to the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons "in an even shorter time than was originally proposed in our 15 January statement."<sup>39</sup> Shevardnadze also adopted a bullying tone toward Shultz, who he hinted was lying about the outcome of the summit.<sup>40</sup>

For the remainder of 1986 and the first two months of 1987 the Soviet leadership maintained a hostile and slightly contemptuous tone toward the Reagan administration, while basically marking time in U.S.-Soviet bilateral relations.<sup>41</sup> The pause may have been attributable to uncertainty about U.S. domestic conditions (Iran-Contra), and Gorbachev's involvement with other foreign policy activities, notably his November 1986 visit to India and his hosting of the February 1987 Moscow forum, both of which gave a boost to his "new political thinking."<sup>42</sup> The Soviet Union also engaged in halfhearted and ultimately unsuccessful efforts to use the SDI-INF linkage established at Reykjavik to generate a split between Western Europe and the United States. However, this period came to an abrupt end on February 28, when Gorbachev issued a personal statement in which he "delinked"

<sup>38</sup>TASS, September 23, 1986, in FBIS-SU, September 24, 1986.

<sup>39</sup>*Pravda*, November 6, 1986.

<sup>40</sup>"As a direct participant in the talks in the Icelandic capital, I remember well the way the agreement in principle on the entire package of the measures for nuclear disarmament was reached, with the exception of the one issue of SDI. I presume that my Vienna interlocutor also remembers this." Shevardnadze news conference, November 10, 1986, TASS report in FBIS-SU, November 13, 1986. Shevardnadze of course was later to change his attitude toward Shultz, whom he came to regard with respect and affection. What actually took place at Reykjavik remains in dispute. See Regan, *For the Record*, pp. 337-355; Strobe Talbott, *The Master of the Game*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1988; and Paul H. Nitze, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost*, Grove Weidenfeld, New York, 1989, pp. 428-436 for accounts.

<sup>41</sup>In his speech to the February Moscow forum "For a Nuclear-Free World, For the Survival of Mankind," Gorbachev mocked the American president, referring to his comments in Geneva about a hypothetical invasion of extraterrestrials which would force the United States and the Soviet Union to cooperate. *Pravda*, February 17, 1987.

<sup>42</sup>The Delhi Declaration signed by Gorbachev and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi endorsed many of Gorbachev's new themes. For the text, see *Pravda*, November 28, 1986.

INF from the Reykjavik package deal, thus preparing the way for the conclusion of the zero-option INF agreement.<sup>43</sup>

The Gorbachev statement was a turning point for the military, in that public criticism of its policies essentially dates from this decision. Within a week of the Gorbachev statement, Aleksandr Bovin published an article in *Moscow News* in which he noted that "the building and deployment of hundreds of new missiles in Europe must have cost a huge amount of money. And if we agree to destroy these missiles: Why then were they built? Why were they deployed?"<sup>44</sup> Bovin's statement, which presaged the kinds of criticisms that were to be expressed by MFA officials beginning in late 1987 and by Shevardnadze himself in the middle of 1988, drew an immediate reply from the military. In an article that appeared in the next issue of *Moscow News*, General Lebedev wrote that the SS-20s "were necessary in the specific conditions of the mid-1970s as part of the Soviet-American parity that emerged from the realities of the 1960s," and that by the 1980s, "much changed in the strategic alignment of forces. The balance became more clear-cut. The margin of strength of defence against all thinkable combinations was more considerable, and there appeared a possibility and necessity to approach many things in a new way."<sup>45</sup> Lebedev did not criticize the emerging INF treaty or argue for the retention of the SS-20s. But he did object to the retrospective questioning of policies that were noncontroversial at the time they were adopted and that were taken in accordance with the wishes of the civilian leadership.<sup>46</sup> As will be seen below, on several occasions during the next few years the military felt that it was retroactively being made a scapegoat for the problems of Soviet society and foreign policy.

Along with the progress toward an INF agreement, a second development that tended to favor the MFA to the detriment of the military was the worsening domestic economic situation and

<sup>43</sup>*Pravda*, March 1, 1987.

<sup>44</sup>Aleksandr Bovin, "The World on My Personal Computer: Breakthrough," *Moscow News*, No. 10, 1987, p. 3. The appearance of critical articles in the press at this time also may have been linked to the rise of Yakovlev, who was promoted to candidate membership on the Politburo in January 1987 (and full membership in June of that year). Until September 1988 Ligachev and Yakovlev both claimed some responsibility for overseeing the press—hence the conflicting signals. (Bovin reportedly was summoned to the Central Committee to explain his article, according to a personal communication from a Soviet official.) See also Harry Gelman, *Gorbachev's First Five Years in the Soviet Leadership: The Clash of Personalities and the Remaking of Institutions*, The RAND Corporation, R-3951-A, forthcoming.

<sup>45</sup>Yuri Lebedev, "Why SS-20 Missiles Have Appeared," *Moscow News*, No. 11, 1987, p. 3.

<sup>46</sup>The military was not alone in resenting retrospective criticism of the decision to deploy the SS-20s. See also the views of retired First Deputy Foreign Minister Kornienko, "The Truth and Lies About the SS-20 Missile," *SShA: Ekonomika, Politika, Ideologiya*, No. 4, 1989, pp. 42-52.

Gorbachev's growing awareness of it. Contrary to what is often suggested in the West, Gorbachev did not assume power convinced that the Soviet Union would be required to retrench internationally because of its economic difficulties. He did argue that there was a "two-sided" relationship between domestic and international affairs, but tended to stress that domestic strength was needed to achieve foreign policy successes, rather than that foreign policy achievements could play a role in remedying domestic deficiencies.

In his May 1986 speech to the MFA, for example, Gorbachev argued that recent Soviet economic difficulties had had an effect on the Soviet Union's "foreign-policy position," as the West sought to exploit these difficulties to replace the détente of the 1970s with a cold war. But he went on to state that "now [May 1986], when one can note a change for the better in our domestic affairs, there also has been a certain improvement in the international situation." These arguments, which were forcefully repeated in his book *Perestroika*, in fact were variations on the Brezhnevian theme that détente was the product of Soviet strength and had to be imposed on the West, whereas tension and cold war were the result of Soviet weaknesses: "Socialism is meant to play the decisive role in subduing the enemies of détente. . . . Whenever socialism lets up, militarism, power politics and imperial ambitions surge."<sup>47</sup>

By the middle of 1987, however, Gorbachev's view of the relationship between domestic and international affairs was becoming closer to the one more often attributed to him by Western analysts. In his report to the June plenum, he took a more somber view of the Soviet Union's economic prospects, claiming that the improvements achieved were "neither radical nor cardinal. The braking mechanism still has not been smashed nor replaced by the mechanism of acceleration."<sup>48</sup> He then introduced a series of economic reforms that included greater reliance on market methods.

By opening up a discussion of the seriousness of Soviet economic problems, the June plenum gave Shevardnadze new latitude to claim a greater role for the MFA in solving the Soviet Union's *domestic* problems. Shevardnadze's new approach became apparent in late June, when he spoke to the party activists within the MFA on the theme of implementing the decisions of the plenum. He defined the tasks of the MFA in economic terms, claiming that foreign policy was an extension

<sup>47</sup>Gorbachev, *Perestroika*, Harper & Row, New York, 1987, pp. 193-194. By the time *Perestroika* hit the bookstores in late 1987, Gorbachev was no longer making these kinds of statements.

<sup>48</sup>*Prauda*, June 26, 1987.



of domestic policy and expounding the "thesis that the goal of diplomacy is to form an external environment that is favorable for internal development. . . ." <sup>49</sup> He also criticized the MFA and other foreign policy institutions for failing to "deliver the warning signals about our lagging behind in the scientific-technical revolution," to predict structural changes in the world economy, and to "caution against lopsided infatuation with trade in energy products." In Shevardnadze's overall assessment, the Soviet Union "in the last 15 years [had] been steadily losing its position as one of the leading industrially developed countries."

Shevardnadze then outlined two sets of tasks that the MFA had to undertake to reverse the USSR's declining international positions. The first, and the one usually noted in the West, was to promote an international détente:

The main thing is that the country not incur additional expenses in connection with the need to maintain defensive capability and protect its lawful foreign policy interests. This means that we must seek ways to limit and reduce military rivalry, eliminate confrontational features in relations with other states, and suppress crisis situations. We must do this, of course, without sacrificing our principles, class interests, and our ideals.

Second, and less frequently noted, Shevardnadze stressed the role of radical, visionary thinking as a tool to strengthen the Soviet Union's international positions. "Imperialism," he declared, "will under no circumstances abandon its fixed idea that the most progressive achievements of human thought, when embodied in means of destruction, are capable of perpetuating its domination and holding back the onward course of history." Unlike imperialism, socialism was able to assume the "all human" task of freeing mankind from the nuclear threat, which in turn would serve socialism's class interests by "democratizing" international relations and depriving imperialism of the means to perpetuate itself. Borrowing the language of economic reform used at the plenum, he argued that the Soviet Union was able to produce "a special type of product whose price now exceeds the cost of all things known to mankind. This product is political thought and political thinking, for some time now new political thinking." This "made in the USSR" product is "completely competitive in the world market," and had been "gaining the upper hand, at times returning lost status to our foreign policy." Shevardnadze went on to criticize the MFA for having had too little a share in

<sup>49</sup> *Vestnik MID*, No. 2, 1987.

the output of this "product," whose "production is set up in the highest echelons of the leadership of the party and the country."<sup>50</sup>

While calling upon the MFA to step up its "production" of new thinking, Shevardnadze stressed that its main task was to translate the vision into political reality: "Soviet diplomacy has a clear goal before it—to materialize the concept of the new political thinking in international-legal norms and principles." In the military and security sphere, the ultimate "materialization" of the new thinking, Shevardnadze stressed, was the elimination of all nuclear and chemical weapons, which he argued was, after Reykjavik, an increasingly realistic possibility. As in his 1986 congress speech (although in somewhat less aggressive tones), Shevardnadze stressed that achievement of such a world would serve socialism's "class interests in conditions of the nuclear and space age." By eliminating nuclear weapons and international tensions, socialism would finally be able to "reveal its advantages."

Thus as he neared the end of his second year as foreign minister, Shevardnadze was beginning to articulate a coherent world view that took account of the Soviet domestic reforms, provided a rationale for the pursuit of achievable agreements with the West, and remained faithful, at least in rhetorical terms, to the traditional Soviet view that the USSR had a special relationship to peace and a unique historical mission to fulfill. Up to this point, strong criticism of the military was not a noticeable feature of Shevardnadze's published statements. As will be seen in the next section, however, the elements of conflict already were in place, and were to become apparent in the following year.

Shevardnadze's increasingly critical stance toward the military was also reflected in a series of bureaucratic reforms that were intended to enhance the MFA's ability to challenge the defense establishment on controversial issues. Following Gorbachev's May 1986 speech, Shevardnadze undertook an extensive restructuring of the ministry.<sup>51</sup> In addition to reshuffling its geographic departments, he established several new functional bureaus, including a Directorate for Questions of Arms Limitation and Disarmament and a Department for Questions of the Peaceful Use of Atomic Energy and Space. Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Karpov, formerly the head of the Soviet START delegation, was named to head the arms control directorate. General Konstantin Mikhailov, formerly of the General Staff, was named Karpov's

<sup>50</sup>This would seem to confirm the view of those Western scholars who have claimed that promulgation of the "new political thinking" was very much a top-down process, in which a handful of personal assistants to Gorbachev, working with Shevardnadze and Yakovlev, developed slogans and concepts to which the bureaucracy then responded.

<sup>51</sup>The reorganization was announced in a circular note sent to the Moscow diplomatic community in June 1986.

deputy.<sup>52</sup> Shevardnadze later claimed that without the creation of the arms control directorate, "we hardly would have coped with the volume of work that was required of us" by the pace of U.S.-Soviet arms negotiations leading to the conclusion of the INF treaty.<sup>53</sup> The MFA also set up a new Scientific Coordination Center, headed by Vladimir Shustov, a veteran Soviet arms control negotiator. The center's function was to expand MFA contacts with the Academy of Sciences and other sources of expertise, and thus help the ministry exert influence in areas of policy that were previously the exclusive province of the military.<sup>54</sup>

The MFA also expanded and improved the quality of its publications directed at domestic and foreign audiences. In August 1987 it launched a new bimonthly, *Bulletin of the Foreign Ministry of the USSR*, with a summary of Gorbachev's May 1986 speech as the keynote item. The *Bulletin* mainly publishes documents and official notices. It is generally nonpolemical, but has played a role in the struggle over Soviet defense and arms control policy by publicizing the activities of civilian defense experts advising the MFA and by offering alternative views of Soviet military history. Shevardnadze also revamped the monthly *International Affairs*. This journal had been formally put out by the Znanie Society, but was linked to the MFA and known for its orthodox and uninteresting treatment of international topics.<sup>55</sup> In mid-1987 the MFA assumed formal co-responsibility for the publication. Of the eleven members of the journal's editorial council, two were deputy foreign ministers (Karpov and Petrovskii), and a third, Teimuraz Stepanov, was a personal assistant to Shevardnadze. The journal, which appears in English and French as well as Russian (articles in the foreign-language editions come out a month later than the original), soon distinguished itself by publishing harsh criticisms of many aspects of Soviet military policy.

The significance of Shevardnadze's personnel and organizational changes became increasingly apparent in late 1987 and early 1988, as the MFA became involved in clashes with the military on numerous policy issues.

<sup>52</sup>F. Stephen Larrabee, "Gorbachev and the Soviet Military," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 66, No. 5 (1988), p. 1011.

<sup>53</sup>*JA*, No. 10, 1988, p. 31. To U.S. participants in the INF talks, it nonetheless was clear that the Soviet side had great difficulty in handling the workload in Geneva, and also lacked the necessary office and communications equipment. See David T. Jones, "How to Negotiate with Gorbachev's Team," *Orbis*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (1989), p. 367.

<sup>54</sup>For an official account of the research activities of the MFA, see Shevardnadze, "Diplomacy and Science: Alliance in the Name of the Future," *Kommunist*, No. 2, 1990.

<sup>55</sup>Shevchenko claimed that Gromyko was its "nominal editor-in-chief" and that "many articles in it . . . were screened by Gromyko." *Breaking With Moscow*, p. 156.

### III. MFA-MILITARY DIFFERENCES

Representatives of the MFA first began to question previous Soviet defense decisions publicly in late 1987, as Shultz and Shevardnadze rushed toward completion of the double-zero INF agreement. In November, Deputy Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh claimed that a number of Soviet decisions had "clearly not been optimal."

[T]he effective development of our technology rather than political analysis influenced the adoption of some decisions. Take medium-range missiles, for instance. We had quite enough SS-4 and SS-5 missiles in Europe. Then we began to deploy SS-20s. Technically, they are more perfect. But the question is how they fitted into our military-strategic concept in the European theatre. I repeat: national interests must determine strategy, while strategy must determine political tactics and, to a certain extent, the technological development of the armed forces.<sup>1</sup>

However, an official spokesman of the MFA later stated that Bessmertnykh was speaking "in a personal capacity,"<sup>2</sup> and Shevardnadze himself did not launch a full-scale critique of Soviet defense policy until more than six months later. Shevardnadze's reticence probably was linked to domestic politics. The period October 1987 to April 1988—from the Yeltsin affair to the reprimand of Ligachev after the publication of Nina Andreeva's programmatic attack on reformist trends—has been characterized as "Gorbachev in Retreat,"<sup>3</sup> and was not a propitious time for taking on the forces of conservatism.

The backdrop to Shevardnadze's adoption of a more critical stance was the 19th All-Union party conference, which took place in late June 1988. The conference dealt primarily with domestic affairs, but some attention was paid to international policy. In late May the Central Committee issued ten theses for the conference, the last of which was devoted to the international aspects and implications of restructuring. It stated that "in striving for military-strategic parity, we did not always take advantage of opportunities to ensure the state's security by political means, and, as a result, we allowed ourselves to be drawn into

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<sup>1</sup>"The Art of Weighing Possibilities," *New Times*, No. 46, 1987.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Mitchell, "Moscow Aide Doubts SS20 Decision," *Washington Post*, November 21, 1987.

<sup>3</sup>Gelman, *Gorbachev's First Five Years in the Soviet Leadership*, forthcoming.

an arms race"<sup>4</sup> with adverse economic and social consequences. In addition to calling for a greater reliance on "political means," the Central Committee issued guidelines for Soviet defense construction, "the effectiveness of which must henceforth be ensured primarily by qualitative parameters with respect both to equipment and to personnel." The military thus was hit with a doubly negative message: first, Soviet security was to be based more on political and less on military means; second, to the extent that military means were required, there was to be a shift from a quantitative to a qualitative emphasis.

Although the party conference was not a complete success from Gorbachev's perspective (owing to the large number of conservative delegates selected by local party organizations), the essence of the tenth Central Committee thesis was preserved in the conference's "Resolution on Restructuring":

All defense building must henceforth be geared predominantly to qualitative parameters—with regard both to equipment and military science and to the personnel of the armed forces. In guaranteeing the reliable security of the Soviet state and its allies, it must be implemented in accordance with our defensive doctrine.<sup>5</sup>

In the ensuing weeks, Shevardnadze and his closest aides sought to interpret the decisions of the conference as a broad mandate to open a critical discussion of all aspects of Soviet foreign and military policy.

In late July the MFA sponsored a "scientific and practical conference" that was billed as a step toward implementation of the decisions of the party conference. It was attended by MFA officials, institute experts, and officials from the Central Committee, the KGB, and various Soviet public organizations such as the Union of Soviet Societies of Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries and the Soviet Peace Committee. Shevardnadze delivered an opening speech that contained strong criticisms of various aspects of Soviet military policy going all the way back to the immediate postwar years. Criticisms of the military also were reported by the deputy foreign ministers who served as rapporteurs for the eight sections of the conference charged with discussing different aspects of Soviet foreign policy.

The only individual from the defense establishment to address the conference was Vitalii Shabanov, the Deputy Minister of Defense responsible for the defense industry. In his speech, Shabanov claimed that his ministry was working in close contact with the MFA, and that

<sup>4</sup>*Pravda*, May 27, 1988.

<sup>5</sup>*Pravda*, July 5, 1988.

the two organizations "see eye-to-eye on both military technological matters . . . and political problems."<sup>6</sup> This in itself was a striking statement, in that it seemed to accept as a given an MFA voice in "military technological matters." Notwithstanding Shabanov's claims, the conference provided the occasion for the airing of significant differences between the two ministries, and led to a sharp reaction from Yegor Ligachev, the leading conservative on the Politburo.

The proceedings of the conference were given wide publicity in the Soviet media.<sup>7</sup> Subsequently, attacks on the military were heard with increasing frequency in publications sponsored by or with close ties to the MFA. These included the MFA's own *Bulletin, International Affairs*, the weekly *New Times*, and reform-minded journals such as *Moscow News* and *Literaturnaia gazeta* that provided a forum for MFA spokesmen.

Drawing upon statements by Shevardnadze and his deputies, as well as articles in those organs that plausibly can be linked to the MFA, this section discusses the nature of MFA-military conflict in five areas: doctrine, force reductions, military secrecy, verification and East-West security institutions, and questions concerning nationality and internal order problems. As will be seen, most of these conflicts were already simmering below the surface in 1986 and 1987, but burst into public view mainly in 1988 and continued into 1989. With the revolutions in Eastern Europe in the second half of 1989, the terms of the debate tended to shift as both the MFA and the military adjusted their positions on various issues in response to the changed geopolitical circumstances.

## DOCTRINE

Gorbachev introduced the term "sufficiency" into the Soviet internal discussion of military doctrine and force levels in his report to the 27th party congress in February 1986. He claimed that the Soviet Union was interested in "restricting military potential within the limits of reasonable sufficiency."<sup>8</sup> However, he went on to state that the character and level of these limits were themselves limited by the positions and actions of the United States and its allies, and that the Soviet Union, while it eschewed claims to greater security, "would not settle for less." Although Gorbachev's formulation fell somewhat short of Brezhnev's sweeping definitions of the Soviet Union's security require-

<sup>6</sup>IA, No. 11, p. 26.

<sup>7</sup>Excerpts from the proceedings appeared in *Vestnik MID, International Affairs*, and *Argumenty i fakty*.

<sup>8</sup>*Pravda*, February 26, 1986.

ments, initially it did not appear to cause much concern in military circles. As used by Gorbachev, sufficiency could be interpreted as not incompatible with fairly traditional Soviet views of parity.

In his speech to the congress, Shevardnadze did not even use the term sufficiency and, as noted, stressed that the Soviet Union was able to create "everything necessary" to ensure its security and that of its allies. Nonetheless, he gave some early hints that he was thinking about new approaches to arms limitation and possibly considering reductions in Soviet forces that previous leaderships had rejected as unequal. In discussing French and British nuclear weapons, he stated that the Soviet Union was prepared to disregard "the customary logic of the arms race" by leaving them outside of any agreement.

At its May 1987 meeting in East Berlin, the Political Consultative Committee (PCC) of the Warsaw Pact adopted a "Document on the Military Doctrine of the Warsaw Pact States," which declared that Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO) military doctrine was purely defensive and that henceforth the Pact would strive to maintain an East-West military balance at the lowest possible level.<sup>9</sup> Soviet institutions and individuals immediately responded to the declaration by trying to attach precise meanings to the sufficiency concept and to shade its policy implications in a particular direction.

In a July 1987 roundtable sponsored by *New Times*, for example, retired admiral A. Astafaev, a senior scientific associate at the Institute of the World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), argued that "before creating a non-offensive reasonable defense it is essential at least to restructure one's military potentials and revise military and political views. This will be a protracted process that must begin with the elimination of nuclear weapons and other means of mass destruction."<sup>10</sup> In the same discussion, General Milstein of the USA Institute replied: "Of course the total elimination of nuclear arsenals is the only real way of averting a nuclear holocaust. But it will take time to achieve this objective. Hence the transition to reasonable sufficiency should proceed simultaneously with the reduction of nuclear stockpiles and also of armed forces and conventional armaments." Astafaev, using the term "reasonable defense," appeared to support the political leadership's antinuclear campaign, but called for a virtual standstill on the conventional front. Milstein, using the term "reasonable sufficiency," called for simultaneous progress in both areas, and if anything

<sup>9</sup>*Pravda*, May 30, 1987.

<sup>10</sup>"Of Reasonable Sufficiency, Precarious Parity, and International Security," *New Times*, No. 27, 1987.

mildly disparaged the utopianism of Gorbachev's antinuclear campaign.<sup>11</sup>

The Soviet defense establishment tended to stress the nuclear aspects of sufficiency. In an article that appeared in *Pravda* on July 27, Defense Minister Yazov drew a sharp distinction between the strategic nuclear and conventional aspects of reasonable sufficiency.<sup>12</sup>

When we speak of maintaining the armed forces and our military potential at a level of reasonable sufficiency, we have in mind that at the present stage the essence of sufficiency regarding the Soviet strategic nuclear forces is determined by the need to prevent anyone getting away with impunity with a nuclear attack in any, even the most unfavorable, circumstances. As for the conventional means, sufficiency amounts to a quantity and quality of armed forces and armaments capable of reliably ensuring the collective defense of the socialist community. It is not we who set the limits of sufficiency, it is the actions of the United States and NATO. The Warsaw Pact countries do not aspire to military superiority, they do not seek greater security but neither will they accept a lower security or tolerate anyone's military superiority over themselves.

By repeating, almost verbatim, a part of Gorbachev's report to the 27th party congress, Yazov sought to identify his own interpretation of sufficiency with that of the political leadership. At the same time, however, by drawing distinctions between the nuclear and conventional aspects of doctrine and force planning, Yazov was positioning himself to resist major changes in Warsaw Pact operational doctrine. In the same article he wrote that "two tasks," the "prevention of war and readiness to rebuff an aggressor," were linked and stemmed from the fact that NATO and the United States remained wedded to a doctrine that envisioned the possible first use of nuclear weapons. This line of argument left room for adherence to the traditional Soviet position that the Warsaw Pact had to be able to execute sweeping counteroffensive options in order to neutralize NATO nuclear and chemical forces,

<sup>11</sup>Elsewhere in his remarks, Milstein said that "sufficiency in the context of the total elimination of nuclear weapons is a matter of the distant future." The January 15 plan "did not find due support in the West, especially among the political leadership, and among some scientists as well." He went on to summarize the arguments advanced in favor of retaining nuclear weapons: that they could not be "de-invented;" that they had deterred war; and that South Africa, Israel, Brazil, and Pakistan would acquire these weapons.

<sup>12</sup>In the period between the East Berlin meeting of the PCC and the appearance of the article, Defense Minister Sokolov had been fired as a result of the Rust affair, and Yazov appointed in his place and accorded candidate membership on the Politburo. It is unclear whether Yazov's views on doctrine were different from those of Sokolov (who was on the Soviet delegation to the meeting), but he clearly showed a new readiness to express his views more forcefully than had his predecessor.



while allowing the military to claim that it was adopting a defensive approach.

Throughout 1987 there were ongoing efforts by the military to associate a "defensive" military posture with a declared readiness to forgo nuclear first use, while tampering as little as possible with conventional planning and force levels. In October 1987 Yazov published a pamphlet in which he argued that "it is impossible to rout an aggressor with defense alone" and that it was necessary for Soviet forces to be able "to conduct a decisive offensive."<sup>13</sup> In December of that year, Chief of the General Staff Marshal Akhromeev published an article in which he consistently used the term "defense" rather than "reasonable" sufficiency. Akhromeev for all practical purposes undercut claims that the Soviet military was undergoing a reorientation toward a defensive military posture by reiterating the traditional line that Warsaw Pact doctrine was inherently defensive owing to the nature of the "social system" of the member states.<sup>14</sup>

Shevardnadze and the MFA were not drawn publicly into the debate on sufficiency until mid-1988. Like the military, albeit for different reasons, before that time Shevardnadze had reasons to concentrate on nuclear rather than conventional issues. Until almost the end of 1987, his main priority was the INF treaty, which entailed not only a heavy schedule of meetings with Shultz, but difficult negotiations with the military over verification and related questions.<sup>15</sup> He thus had no reason to stir up disputes in the conventional area.

But with the conclusion of the INF agreement and the 19th party conference, Shevardnadze no longer felt the same constraints in his relations with the military. In addition, his own priorities shifted from nuclear arms control to a possible European conventional arms reduction agreement, which he saw as not only desirable in its own right, but also (given Western misgivings about Warsaw Pact conventional forces) the key to further progress toward nuclear arms control in Europe. Thus in his speech to the July 1988 MFA conference, Shevardnadze for the first time offered an explicit and systematic critique of Soviet strategy and doctrine in which he stressed the relevance of the sufficiency principle for Soviet conventional as well as nuclear forces.

<sup>13</sup>D. T. Yazov, *Na strazhe sotsializma i mira*, Moscow, Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1987.

<sup>14</sup>Akhromeev, "The Doctrine of Averting War and Defending Peace and Socialism," *World Marxist Review*, No. 12, 1987.

<sup>15</sup>Shevardnadze alluded to difficulties with the military over INF in his October 1989 report to the Supreme Soviet: "I remember at the time there were quite a few people who accused the diplomats of making concessions and giving ground and not taking defense interests into account." *Pravda*, October 24, 1989.

Shevardnadze began with "historical excursus" on the Great Patriotic War, which he noted had "exerted a decisive influence on the formation of our notions of security."<sup>16</sup> He went on to argue, however, that the lessons that had been derived from the war and that had "predetermined the main strategic, above all military, institutions of our security" were "not being reassessed clearly enough in light of recent experience." According to Shevardnadze, "the world war showed that the stockpiles of weapons of the side subjected to attack were not of decisive importance for rebuffing the aggression. It turned out that any advantage enjoyed by the aggressor can be reduced to nought if the state possesses a developed industrial and scientific and technological base." This "lesson" clearly was intended to generate support for the domestic reform agenda and to bolster arguments for a shift in spending from military procurement to investment in the economy.

Shevardnadze's criticism of the fixation on quantity probably was not a blanket condemnation of the entire military establishment. There were those in the military leadership, notably Ogarkov, who had already spoken out against the quantitative emphasis and had tried to redirect attention to qualitative factors. Nonetheless, Shevardnadze's strictures probably applied to the majority of the military leaders, and especially those in the traditionally dominant ground forces.<sup>17</sup>

Moving to the postwar period, Shevardnadze drew even more sweeping conclusions. He argued that the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki distorted the "identity and life" of humanity and "changed its path to the future by sharply turning postwar development towards the nuclear arms race and toward an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty."<sup>18</sup> He went on to say that Soviet foreign policy, while not to blame for the root causes of the cold war, might have contributed to it. Although this line of argument could have been aimed as much at foreign as at domestic audiences (to gain credibility for current Soviet policy by admitting past culpability), it ran counter to the traditional Soviet claim that the USSR was the target of nuclear blackmail after World War II and that only the Soviet military buildup and the establishment of parity made possible a transition from cold war to détente.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup>I/A, No. 10, 1988, p. 16.

<sup>17</sup>See Rose Gottemoeller, *Conflict and Consensus in the Soviet Armed Forces*, The RAND Corporation, R-3759-AF, October 1989.

<sup>18</sup>I/A, No. 10, 1988, p. 11.

<sup>19</sup>This analysis of the Soviet strategic situation was foreshadowed in a remarkable article by an institute researcher, Viacheslav Dashichev, that appeared a little more than a month before Shevardnadze made these remarks. ("East-West: Quest for New Relations—On the Priorities of the Soviet State's Foreign Policy," *Literaturnaia gazeta*,

Shevardnadze went on to say that postwar experience had shown that "even if the force is superior, more often than not it does not give the aggressor the planned result, and in instances it becomes a sort of boomerang which strikes its own positions."<sup>20</sup> He cited the Iran-Iraq war as a case in point. He went on to argue that "small wars" had been of little significance since 1945, and that "all of them and each one individually only served to complicate the problems around which the conflicts had arisen, and to create new ones. Even if the map of the world has changed, it has only been in minor details."

Having argued that "war cannot be a rational instrument of politics," he posed the question of whether the arms race could be such an instrument. His own answer was yes, but only in a purely negative sense: "An enemy can be exhausted and bled white through an arms race, but at the cost of one's own economic and social base being undermined."<sup>21</sup> Moving directly into the sphere of military policy, Shevardnadze went on to claim, in line with the decisions of the 19th party conference, that "ability, not numbers, reliance on quality, general development and high level of scientific and technological infrastructure, not size of armaments and contingents" are what guarantee defense and security.<sup>22</sup>

In addition to criticizing many in the military for their attachment to quantity, Shevardnadze also attacked Soviet strategic thinking. He argued that the "peace of the Soviet people must be protected

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May 18, 1988.) Asserting that "any hegemonism contains the seeds of its own downfall," Dashichev drew upon the experience of the two world wars and the allied coalitions against Germany to argue that the international system tended to unite against any power that was perceived as too strong and threatening. At this time there clearly were links between Dashichev and Shevardnadze. Dashichev served as the head of an MFA advisory council on the socialist countries that was set up by Shevardnadze. It is also noteworthy that Shevardnadze and Lenin were the only Soviet leaders quoted in Dashichev's article. Subsequently, Shevardnadze and Dashichev parted company, as Dashichev argued that a united Germany should become part of NATO, while the MFA pressed for a different arrangement. In April 1990 MFA spokesman Iuri Gremitikhin stated to the press that "Professor Dashichev and his political allies are not members of the expert community participating in working out Soviet policies." TASS, April 4, 1990, in FBIS-SU, April 5, 1990.

<sup>20</sup>IA, No. 10, 1988.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 18. These remarks ran counter to assessments made by serving and retired military officers. See, for example, the comments of retired Major General Vadim Makarevskii, senior scientific associate at IMEMO, in "Of Reasonable Sufficiency, Precarious Parity, and International Security," *New Times*, No. 27, 1987: "[T]he Clausewitz formula is not applicable to world war. But war is nevertheless still a continuation of politics as regards local conflicts. Take the Iranian-Iraqi war—a classical illustration to Clausewitz. The Falklands war was also a continuation of politics. The Clausewitz formula remains valid also in other spheres—the arms buildup, which also is a continuation of politics."

<sup>22</sup>IA, No. 10, 1988, p. 17.

fundamentally," and then went on to imply that the military leadership had ceased to understand the "fundamentals" in its own sphere. To remedy this situation, he called for understanding "the root principles of defense and how they should be understood in today's conditions."<sup>23</sup> In Shevardnadze's view, perhaps the most fundamental of the "root principles" is that it is in the Soviet interest "to have the military activity of all countries confined to their national boundaries." This logic applied with particular force to nuclear and chemical weapons. Accordingly, Shevardnadze argued that the INF treaty was of asymmetrical benefit to the Soviet Union, in that it took "into account that these missiles are of different value from the standpoint of Soviet and American security. . . . Thanks to it, the American nuclear presence has been moved away from our borders."<sup>24</sup> He went on to claim that "even an elementary technical level of knowledge" leads to the conclusion that "chemical weapons are more dangerous for us and for European states than for the United States. Rivalry in this sphere has proved profitable for the USA, as geographical factors are not in our favor."<sup>25</sup>

Shevardnadze stressed that the United States formed the main "strategic front" confronting the Soviet Union and that a major objective of Soviet policy ought to be not only the neutralization of this front, but the prevention of the formation of additional strategic fronts. Thus he condemned the Soviet departure in late 1983 from the Geneva INF talks, which "hastened and facilitated the formation of the second strategic front in Europe standing opposed to us."<sup>26</sup>

To undo the damage caused by previous policies and to lessen the number of "fronts" facing the Soviet Union, Shevardnadze called for policies that would eradicate "enemy images" in Western publics. In Shevardnadze's view, primary responsibility for the creation of these "images" rested not with the military, but with previous political leaders, who had undermined faith in the "creative peaceability" of the Soviet people through "repressions, lavish promises to 'bury you,' incorrect steps regarding friends, and the preaching, during the détente period, of an erroneous, I would say anti-Leninist view of peaceful coexistence as a specific form of the class struggle."<sup>27</sup> But Shevardnadze also criticized the Soviet military and argued that even in strictly *strategic* terms, Soviet policy had been wrongheaded and had

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

resulted in less rather than more security for the Soviet Union. In effect, Shevardnadze accused the defense establishment not only of having too great an influence on Soviet foreign policy, but of basic incompetence in its own domain. Preoccupied with accumulating weapons, the military had failed to understand that the mere existence of certain weapons and their deployment near the Soviet Union was asymmetrically detrimental to Soviet security interests. As Shevardnadze later told the Supreme Soviet, "we have rethought the situation: security does not mean having more weapons ourselves, but having fewer weapons against us."<sup>28</sup>

Shevardnadze appeared to believe that it was possible to create, using arms control and other political means, a radically different world in which nuclear and chemical weapons would be banned or dramatically reduced, and in which conventional forces would be restructured and stationed only on national territory. In such a world, the position of the Soviet Union would be drastically improved—not only in political and economic terms, but in military terms as well. The United States would retreat to the position of an over-the-horizon power, and the Soviet Union would be left surrounded by an array of small and medium powers (and China) with no ability to threaten the Soviet Union with weapons of mass destruction or conventional invasion.

Shevardnadze's foray into military strategy was followed by sharpened MFA criticisms of perceived military foot-dragging in formulating new operational principles. Shortly after the MFA conference, Petrovskii told a *Washington Post* reporter that "Yazov does not understand this issue in the correct way," but that the "people involved in policy do."<sup>29</sup> Petrovskii dismissed Yazov's October 1987 book by claiming that "military thinking is subject to inertia" and that the Soviet military staff, like those of other countries, was preparing for the last war. In a November 1988 speech to a conference of the MFA party organization, Shevardnadze himself addressed the issue of operational principles. He claimed that the Soviet Union was "still not everywhere acting with sufficient consistency" and that "we are overdue in drafting and firming up a military doctrine and imparting to it a strictly defense emphasis."<sup>30</sup>

This remark preceded by less than a month Gorbachev's dramatic announcement of substantial unilateral force reductions, and may have

<sup>28</sup>*Pravda*, October 24, 1989.

<sup>29</sup>R. Jeffrey Smith, "Soviets Debate Basic Military Posture," *Washington Post*, August 1, 1988.

<sup>30</sup>*Vestnik MID*, No. 22, 1988. See also Shevardnadze's interview in *Moscow News*, No. 52, 1988, p. 8.

been linked to the virtually simultaneous retirement of Marshal Akhromeev. Akhromeev probably did not resign in a dispute over the cuts as such, but was pushed out for having failed to compel the General Staff to undertake seriously the tasks of developing a new operational art and of coming up with plans for parcelling out the manpower and equipment cuts in a rational way.<sup>31</sup> Akhromeev's shortcomings in these areas were essentially confirmed by his successor, General Moiseev, who in a February interview conceded that problems had not been "properly approached" and that "the process of restructuring in formations and units is encountering complications."<sup>32</sup>

With Gorbachev's UN speech, Shevardnadze completed his transition from a low-key, behind-the-scenes commentator on doctrinal matters to a visible participant in the decisionmaking process. In a December speech to yet another MFA conference, he stressed that the "forthcoming work" of the MFA included full participation in a range of issues which traditionally had belonged to the armed forces:

In the military area it is necessary, in conjunction with the Ministry of Defense, the Gosplan, and other departments, to develop detailed plans and measures for carrying out all the tasks set by M. S. Gorbachev. . . . The withdrawal of troops and arms from allied countries, the reformation of the remaining divisions, and the reduction of troops and arms on the territory should be completed within two years, and the first steps in this direction should be taken in the near future.<sup>33</sup>

## FORCE REDUCTIONS

Shevardnadze's views on force reductions derive to a large extent from his thinking on broader questions of strategy and doctrine. He has come out in favor of numerically asymmetrical cuts when they can be regarded as asymmetrically favorable from a strategic point of view. For example, he repeatedly praised the INF treaty for what he saw as its asymmetrically beneficial effects on Soviet security. The treaty "removed from our borders American rockets which in literally a few minutes could fire directly at vitally important facilities on the territory of the USSR. . . . What difference does it make if it happens that we destroy more rockets than the Americans do? We have put more of

<sup>31</sup>See Harry Gelman, *The Soviet Turn Toward Conventional Force Reduction: The Internal Struggle and the Variables at Play*, The RAND Corporation, R-3876-AF, December 1989.

<sup>32</sup>*Krasnaia zvezda*, February 10, 1989.

<sup>33</sup>*Vestnik MID*, No. 23, 1988.

them in place, so let us remove more of them. The main thing is that we are better off."<sup>34</sup>

In late 1986 and early 1987 the MFA attempted to demonstrate the soundness of Shevardnadze's claims through quantitative analysis and computer modeling. The ministry's Scientific Coordination Center began working with IMEMO and the USA Institute, both of which had developed computer models for analyzing the military balance. By early 1987 a working group of the Committee of Soviet Scientists for Peace, Against the Nuclear War Threat (composed mainly of IMEMO, USA Institute, and other Academy of Sciences researchers) had produced a computer-based model that purportedly demonstrated how strategic stability could be maintained and even enhanced at progressively lower levels of nuclear weapons for both sides.<sup>35</sup> The results of the study were presented to the scientific section of the February 1987 Moscow Forum for a Nuclear-free World, for the Survival of Humanity,<sup>36</sup> and an abridged version of the report was published in April of that year.<sup>37</sup>

Although the report was the work of a nongovernmental committee, its findings played a role in shaping MFA thinking on the emerging INF treaty. According to one of the Soviet experts familiar with the models used in the committee study, the developers took as a starting point the assumption that "the military strategic nuclear parity which exists between the USSR and the USA is characterized by a substantial dynamic margin, the so-called 'margin of safety' for both sides."<sup>38</sup> The models then were used to calculate "the existing dynamic margin of the USSR-USA military parity," which in turn enabled the USSR to adopt the approach that led to the INF treaty of 1987.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>34</sup>Interview, *Argumenty i fakty*, No. 18, 1989. See also his remarks to the July 1988 MFA conference cited above.

<sup>35</sup>According to Stephen M. Meyer (citing interviews with Soviet academics and officials), the committee of scientists was set up by Andropov largely as a propaganda instrument, but evolved into a source of genuine expertise for the civilian leadership. "The Sources and Prospects of Gorbachev's New Political Thinking on Security," *International Security*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (1988), pp. 130-131.

<sup>36</sup>Igor Malashenko, "Reasonable Sufficiency and Illusory Superiority," *New Times*, No. 24, 1987, p. 18.

<sup>37</sup>Committee of Soviet Scientists for Peace, Against the Nuclear Threat, *Strategic Stability Under the Conditions of Radical Nuclear Arms Reductions: Report on a Study (Abridged)*, Moscow, April 1987.

<sup>38</sup>A. A. Kokoshin, "The New Soviet Military Doctrine and Unilateral Cuts of the USSR Armed Forces," statement before the Armed Services Committee, U.S. House of Representatives, March 10, 1989.

<sup>39</sup>There was, however, a lively debate among foreign ministry officials about the merits of the study. Some were sharply critical of it for paying too little regard, in their view, to the French and British nuclear forces. See Sergei Vybornov, Andrei Gusenkov, and Vladimir Leontiev, "Nothing Is Simple in Europe," *IA*, No. 3, 1988, pp. 34-41; Vladi-

The same concept of a "dynamic margin" was used to argue that the United States and the Soviet Union could preserve and even enhance strategic stability by eliminating up to 95 percent of their nuclear arsenals. The study further suggested a way to eliminate the remaining 5 percent under stable conditions, thereby lending a veneer of scientific credibility to Gorbachev's plan for a nuclear-free world. Like Western advocates of minimum deterrence, the Soviet scientists based their argument for near-total and, less plausibly, total nuclear disarmament on the unique nature of nuclear weapons. The inherent destructiveness and deterrent power of these weapons in effect were responsible for the "dynamic margin" that permitted large reductions.

In arguing for a complete ban on chemical weapons, Shevardnadze used the same logic by which he justified the INF treaty. Taking his lead from Gorbachev, who announced in an April 1987 speech in Prague that the Soviet Union had ended the production of chemical weapons and was building a special facility for the elimination of existing stocks after the conclusion of an international ban, in his July 1988 MFA speech Shevardnadze argued that the mere existence of chemical weapons was asymmetrically beneficial to the United States.<sup>40</sup> In his speech to the January 1989 Paris conference on chemical weapons, he declared that in the previous two years, the Soviet position on chemical weapons had undergone a "fundamental revolution."<sup>41</sup> He further stated that the Soviet Union was no longer producing chemical weapons, had no chemical weapons stationed outside its national territory, and would begin, in 1989, to eliminate its stocks of weapons at a facility especially constructed for this purpose.<sup>42</sup> But Shevardnadze also criticized the long delay in changing Soviet policy. In his October 1989 report to the Supreme Soviet, he acknowledged that in 1969 the United States unilaterally stopped producing chemical weapons, but

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mir Stupishin, "Indeed, Nothing in Europe Is Simple," *IA*, No. 5, 1988, pp. 69-73; and Vybornov and Leontiev, "The Future of the Old Weapon," *IA*, No. 9, 1988, pp. 81-89. For a discussion of the "scientists" versus "diplomats" debate, see Stephen Shenfield, *Minimum Nuclear Deterrence: The Debate Among Soviet Civilian Analysts*, Center for Policy Development, Brown University, November 1989, pp. 7-18.

<sup>40</sup>For Gorbachev's speech, see *Pravda*, April 11, 1987. Soviet statements regarding chemical weapons were of course partly intended to influence the U.S. and NATO debate concerning binary weapons production by the United States.

<sup>41</sup>*Izvestiia*, January 9, 1989.

<sup>42</sup>At the same time, however, Shevardnadze sided with the military in denying that there are quantitative asymmetries in the chemical weapons stocks of the two sides. In December 1987 the MFA asserted that "the stocks of chemical weapons in the USSR do not exceed 50,000 tons in terms of poisonous substances," reiterated previous assurances that no Soviet chemical weapons were stationed outside national territory, and refuted as "fantastic" Western claims that the USSR had stocks of 250,000-700,000 tons. TASS, December 26, 1987, in FBIS-SU, December 28, 1987.



that the Soviet Union continued to build its stockpiles, "heedless of the billions spent, the damage to the environment, and the danger to people's health."<sup>43</sup>

In other areas of arms control—notably those relating to strategic nuclear and conventional weapons—it was more difficult for Shevardnadze and the MFA to develop arguments for why deep and possibly asymmetrical reductions in Soviet forces would be strategically and militarily advantageous to the USSR. (The economic benefits of such reductions were easier to defend, although difficult to quantify.) Andrei Kokoshin and other researchers linked to the MFA argued that the NATO-Warsaw Pact conventional balance was similar to the strategic balance in having "a certain dynamic margin," but one that they acknowledged was more difficult to calculate. In their view, the size of the "dynamic margin" in the conventional field was not just a function of force levels and balance, but of doctrine and force structure as well. They argued that the dynamic margin would increase "if the two sides rely mainly upon defensive operations and combat actions."<sup>44</sup> Shevardnadze endorsed the view that there is a correlation between defensive orientation and smaller forces. In October 1988 he told a French interviewer that "it goes without saying that the conclusion of agreements on defense without offensive weapons will . . . lead to a reduction in our armed forces."<sup>45</sup>

At the same time that the MFA argued that a mutual, defensive restructuring of forces could lead to large reductions, it supported those civilian analysts who had begun to claim that certain unilateral steps could be taken that would enable the Soviet Union to maintain or even enhance its security with smaller forces. One of the main tactics employed by those advocating this view was to reinterpret Soviet military history and especially the experience of World War II. As has been seen, in his speech to the July 1988 MFA conference Shevardnadze argued that one of the main lessons of the war was the irrelevance of quantity. The MFA lent support to journalists and institute researchers engaged in similar acts of historical revisionism. There was no apparent MFA involvement in the first major "revisionist" article, the much-noted analysis of the Battle of Kursk by

<sup>43</sup>Pravda, October 24, 1989.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid. See also Andrei Kokoshin, Alexander Kononov, Valentin Larionov, Valeri Mazing, *Problems of Ensuring Stability With Radical Cuts in Armed Forces and Conventional Armaments in Europe*, Soviet Committee for European Security and Cooperation, Committee of Soviet Scientists for Peace, Against the Nuclear Threat, Institute of USA and Canada, Moscow, 1989.

<sup>45</sup>Le Nouvel Observateur, October 14–20, 1988.

Kokoshin and Larionov that appeared in an Academy of Sciences journal in the summer of 1988,<sup>46</sup> but the MFA played a role in subsequent efforts to identify and publicize a defensive tradition in pre-Stalinist military history.<sup>47</sup>

It also promoted the more controversial work of Vitalii Shlykov, a free-lance journalist who quickly became known for his sarcastic attacks on alleged military incompetence. Writing in *International Affairs* in late 1988, Shlykov used Western and Soviet data to demonstrate that on the eve of World War II, Soviet tank forces were qualitatively superior to those of the Germans.<sup>48</sup> This ran counter to the view, which Stalin propagated and which contemporary military writers have echoed, that the Red Army fought against overwhelming odds.<sup>49</sup> Shlykov thus partially supported Shevardnadze's argument that even in World War II "stockpiles of weapons" were not of "decisive importance." In a second article that appeared two months later, Shlykov documented the development of the overwhelming Soviet tank advantage in the postwar period, which he attributed to "pre-nuclear thinking" in the military and to a belief on the part of commanders that tanks were "a kind of universal equivalent of military power" that could "make up for the lack of combat skill."<sup>50</sup>

High-level MFA backing for Shlykov's views was indicated when he was one of five authors (three Soviet and two foreign) to win the *International Affairs* prize for the best articles of 1988, and was given further space in the journal to expound his views when the prizes were announced.<sup>51</sup> Conversely, military opposition to Shlykov's views was indicated by the appearance in the military history journal of two polemical articles, one questioning his "simple arithmetic" on the tank

<sup>46</sup>A. A. Kokoshin and V. V. Larionov, "The Battle of Kursk in Light of Contemporary Defense Doctrine," *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodaia zhizn'* (hereinafter *MEiMO*), No. 8, 1988.

<sup>47</sup>See, for example, Kokoshin's "Alexander Svechin: On War and Politics," *IA*, No. 11, 1988, especially pp. 125-126. According to V. L. Miliaev, the editor-in-chief of *Vestnik MID*, "Information is being published on the Soviet Armed Forces. . . . And it turns out that in the 1920s and 1930s we had accumulated valuable experience in this sphere, and some commonsense ideas were expressed that have not lost their meaning for today. We plan to publish the most interesting documents on this problem." From "Glasnost in Diplomacy," *Literaturnaia gazeta*, June 21, 1989.

<sup>48</sup>Vitalii Shlykov, "On the History of Tank Asymmetry in Europe," *IA*, No. 10, 1988.

<sup>49</sup>Shlykov cited as erroneous an article by Colonel General D. A. Volkogonov that appeared in *Pravda*, June 20, 1988.

<sup>50</sup>Shlykov, "Strong Is the Armour . . . : Tank Asymmetry and Real Security," *IA*, No. 12, 1988, p. 39.

<sup>51</sup>Shlykov, "Who Should Work Out Military Strategy," *IA*, No. 5, 1989, pp. 20-24.

asymmetry<sup>52</sup> and another arguing against his attack on the the record of Soviet combat aces against German opponents in World War II.<sup>53</sup>

While MFA-sponsored articles played a role in preparing the psychological climate for the unilateral troop and armament reductions that Gorbachev announced to the UN General Assembly in December 1988, it is unclear what role Shevardnadze played in the actual reduction decision. The possibility of unilateral force reductions was discussed and recommended by some speakers at the July 1988 MFA conference, but was not endorsed by the ministry.<sup>54</sup> As late as November 1988 when he was explicitly asked by a Hungarian newspaper about unilateral Soviet troop withdrawals from Eastern Europe, Shevardnadze replied by downplaying the prospects for such an action and stressing the need for progress in Vienna leading to mutual reductions.<sup>55</sup> Thus Shevardnadze was careful not to get out in front of Gorbachev on this issue or to raise expectations in Eastern Europe or the West, even though the decision in principle to effect unilateral reductions appears to have been already taken in the summer of 1988.<sup>56</sup>

By the same token, once Gorbachev announced the cuts Shevardnadze made no effort to conceal his enthusiasm for them, and in fact used them as a pretext to stake a claim to more extensive MFA involvement in the affairs of the Soviet armed forces. Consistent with his previous practice of convening MFA conferences after major domestic and foreign policy initiatives by Gorbachev, on December 13 he addressed a meeting of the MFA party activists on its tasks in implementing the directives contained in the UN speech. He stressed that the MFA "bears direct and immediate responsibility for making sure that everything announced at the highest political level is implemented, realized and fulfilled."<sup>57</sup> He further hinted that the MFA could expect foot-dragging from the military, and stated that "we have

<sup>52</sup>V. P. Krikunov, "'The Simple Arithmetic' of V. V. Shlykov," *Voennaia istoricheskaiia zhurnal*, No. 4, 1989.

<sup>53</sup>V. N. Chernetskii, "The Role of Aces in the Struggle for Air Superiority," *Voennaia istoricheskaiia zhurnal*, No. 5, 1989. Shlykov had used the example of the flying aces to argue the importance of training over quantity.

<sup>54</sup>See Kovalev's section report, "Soviet Foreign Policy Priorities," *IA*, No. 10, 1988, p. 37.

<sup>55</sup>Interview in *Magyarorszag*, No. 45 (November 4), 1988, in FBIS-SU, November 28, 1988.

<sup>56</sup>Marshal Akhromeev claimed that the issue of troop reductions "arose as early as the summer of 1988, at the time when it became clearly apparent that military tension was falling and that the objective possibility of reducing the armed forces without damaging the country's defense capability had emerged." *Krasnaia zvezda*, July 2, 1989.

<sup>57</sup>"On the Practical Tasks of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Implementing the Ideas and Points Contained in the Speech by M. S. Gorbachev in the UN on 7 December 1988," *Vestnik MID*, No. 23, 1988.

the responsibility of honestly reporting on the state of affairs to the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee and informing them where there are delays and where something is not being done completely or is not being done in the way that follows from our statements."<sup>58</sup>

The following month, he explicitly addressed the question of military attitudes toward unilateral reductions in an interview with a French newspaper. He claimed that the military leadership and personnel accepted the "new principles" of Soviet foreign policy, but that it was understandable for people in the armed forces to be concerned about possible "social, material, or moral harm" resulting from the reductions, "So certain subjective nuances in the assessments prompted by the new doctrine are natural."<sup>59</sup> While some in the military may have been gratified by Shevardnadze's insistence that provision be made for officers and personnel released from service, others no doubt were irritated by his seeming failure to take seriously military misgivings based on assessments of the threat rather than on personal and institutional self-interest.

It is noteworthy that in a speech the following month, Moiseev lashed out against "numerous noncompetent articles" that "raised doubt about the existence of a real military threat" and even argued that the military invented threats to justify its existence.<sup>60</sup> Moiseev did not specify which authors and articles he had in mind, but may have been aiming at one of Shevardnadze's top aides, Deputy Foreign Minister Karpov. A few weeks earlier Karpov had given an interview in which he asked: "Why are armed forces created; who are they created against? They are created to oppose a potential enemy who for some reason or other must exist."<sup>61</sup> That Karpov was a target is further suggested by the fact that his interview was one of three Soviet press items cited in a concerned letter to the editor that appeared in a

<sup>58</sup>Throughout 1987 and 1988, military representatives spoke out vehemently against unilateral cuts. See, for example, the remarks by Colonel General Vladimir Lobov, first deputy chief of the General Staff, in *Magyar Hirlap*, August 31, 1988. After the reductions were announced, Akhromeev and his successor stressed their support for the decision and revealed that the general staff had been carefully consulted. According to Akhromeev, "the decision was prepared very carefully over several months. . . . As for the specific figure of 500,000, it was determined as a result of very great research and assessments of the military-political situation in the world." (Interview, *Krasnaia zvezda*, July 2, 1989.) Moiseev admitted that there were "sharp discussions" and "different approaches to the percentage reduction of categories of personal and, indeed, of military hardware. . . . All the details of the reduction of the army have been worked out most carefully. There have been many times, if not hundreds of consultations, sessions of commissions of experts, special groups, and preparatory discussions."

<sup>59</sup>*Le Figaro*, January 10, 1989, in FBIS-SU, January 12, 1989.

<sup>60</sup>*Krasnaia zvezda*, February 10, 1989.

<sup>61</sup>*Pravda*, January 15, 1989.

Soviet military publication and to which Moiseev gave a lengthy reply.<sup>62</sup>

The controversy regarding the seriousness of the remaining threat from the West was linked to two additional policy issues on which there seemed to be differences between the MFA and the military: the pace at which the Soviet Union should press for the conclusion and implementation of a first-stage Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) agreement, and the advantages and disadvantages for the Soviet Union of a long-term conventional "zero option" for Europe, i.e., an agreement to withdraw all Soviet forces from Eastern Europe in exchange for the removal of U.S. forces from Western Europe and nonindigenous allied forces from the Federal Republic of Germany.

Differences between the MFA and the military over the pace of conventional arms negotiations were apparent beginning in 1988, and probably had something to do with the Soviet handling of the data exchange issue in CFE (discussed below). After President Bush made his 1989 proposal for the quick conclusion of an arms control agreement, Lieutenant General Viktor Starodubov, the head of the disarmament section of the Central Committee, met with reporters from the *Washington Post* and claimed that it would only be practical to realize extensive cuts by 1996 or 1997, rather than, as in the Bush proposal, by 1991. In citing the reasons for the delay, he mentioned the disruptions the cuts would cause for the Soviet military, including the retraining and resettling of military officers in tens of thousands of new apartments.<sup>63</sup> A few days later, the MFA took the unusual step of stating through a TASS diplomatic correspondent that implementation of an agreement was possible as early as 1992-1993, and that "as regards what [Starodubov] said, the USSR Foreign Ministry is authorized to state that he was speaking only in a personal capacity."<sup>64</sup>

While the military seemed content to hold back on the conclusion of a sweeping CFE agreement, Shevardnadze came out in favor of rapid progress. The reasons for Shevardnadze's impatience were largely political: further *mutual* reductions were seen as helpful to Gorbachev and the reform process at home. Shevardnadze thus remained committed to the fast-paced East-West diplomacy that began with the INF

<sup>62</sup>"Once More About the Prestige of the Army," *Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil*, No. 13 (July), 1989. The other articles mentioned by the letter writer were by S. Kondrashov, *Izvestiia*, January 3, 1989; and A. Plutnik, *Izvestiia*, March 20, 1989.

<sup>63</sup>R. Jeffrey Smith and David Remnick, "Soviet Says Bush's Goal Unreachable," *Washington Post*, July 12, 1989.

<sup>64</sup>TASS, July 15, 1989, in FBIS-SU, July 18, 1989.

endgame in 1987,<sup>65</sup> and the MFA expressed regret at the slowdown in the pace of U.S.-Soviet negotiations after President Bush took office.<sup>66</sup>

A second area of MFA-military controversy concerned the ultimate goal of the conventional arms control process. In his February 1986 proposal for the creation of a "comprehensive system of international security," Gorbachev did not call for the elimination of all foreign bases. However, in the course of 1986 this theme became increasingly prominent in MFA statements. In December, Petrovskii wrote that "the USSR's principled position is this: All in all, it would prefer its troops not to be situated anywhere outside its national borders."<sup>67</sup> At the 1986-1989 Vienna CSCE review conference and the parallel negotiations to draft a mandate for the CFE talks, Soviet officials began to stress that a long-term goal of the Soviet Union was the elimination of foreign troops by the year 2000. In his speech to the concluding session of the Vienna conference, Shevardnadze claimed that the "declared fundamental goal" of the Soviet Union was "to end any foreign military presence and bases on the territories of other countries."<sup>68</sup>

Shevardnadze's advocacy of the no-foreign-bases and dissolution of the blocs themes grew more pronounced and persisted even after it became apparent that the Soviet position in Eastern Europe was crumbling and that the Soviet Union faced the prospect of a unilateral withdrawal from Eastern Europe. In his speech to the UN General Assembly in September 1989, Shevardnadze declared that "our fundamental goal is not to have a single Soviet soldier outside the country," and called on the international community to condemn the "encirclement" of other countries and especially the USSR with military bases.<sup>69</sup> The following month, he told the Supreme Soviet that the USSR was prepared to liquidate all its foreign bases by the year 2000 and to draw back within its borders, and again called for the simultaneous dissolution of NATO and the Warsaw Pact.<sup>70</sup>

As will be seen below, however, shortly after Shevardnadze made these remarks the opening of the Berlin Wall and the virtual collapse of the East German state changed the context of the no-foreign-base discussion. Shevardnadze continued to advocate the withdrawal of all

<sup>65</sup>Information based on interviews with East European specialists.

<sup>66</sup>See Shevardnadze's interview in *Izvestiia*, September 12, 1989; also MFA spokesman Gerasimov's criticisms of Vice President Quayle, reported in Michael Dobbs, "Soviets Claim White House Is Laggard on Arms Issues," *Washington Post*, September 12, 1989.

<sup>67</sup>"Security through Disarmament," *MEiMO*, No. 1, 1987.

<sup>68</sup>*Pravda*, January 20, 1989.

<sup>69</sup>*Pravda*, September 27, 1989.

<sup>70</sup>*Pravda*, October 24, 1989.

foreign forces from Europe, but he moderated his support for the dissolution of the blocs no doubt in the hope that preservation of the WTO could help to maintain Soviet influence in Eastern Europe and give the USSR leverage in negotiations concerning German reunification.

## SECRECY AND MILITARY GLASNOST

The Soviet military long has been known for its secretiveness, and there is a history of civil-military tension over the use of military information in negotiations with the West. In addition, civilian and military leaders have differed over the desirability of international agreements that oblige the Soviet Union to give potential adversaries with information about its military forces. At the 1973-1975 CSCE negotiations, it was rumored that the Soviet military was so furious about the section in the Final Act dealing with confidence-building measures that it almost succeeded in having Lev Mendelevich, the senior Soviet diplomat responsible for negotiating Basket I, fired from his post.<sup>71</sup> Similarly, at the 1983-1986 Stockholm Conference on Disarmament in Europe (CDE), there were persistent reports that military representatives on the Soviet delegation were less enthusiastic than their civilian colleagues about reaching an agreement, in part because of the loss of secrecy it would entail.<sup>72</sup> During the INF negotiations, there were many instances of military recalcitrance on verification issues. The key breakthrough on verification did not take place until October 6, 1987, when Soviet negotiators finally handed over photographs and line drawings of Soviet intermediate-range missiles that had long been promised. This step reportedly was personally authorized by Marshal Akhromeev. In general, American negotiators discovered that even commitments by ranking civilian officials could not be considered definitive unless "the highest levels of the Soviet military were clearly involved."<sup>73</sup>

Despite the long history of rumored tensions and disputes, the MFA did not begin to complain publicly about secrecy until well into the Gorbachev period. At the July 1988 conference, First Deputy Foreign

<sup>71</sup>Thomas Krantz, "Moscow and the Negotiation of the Helsinki Accords, 1972-1975," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Oxford University, 1981, p. 153, citing an interview with a "senior West German official."

<sup>72</sup>For Akhromeev's role in Stockholm, see John Borawski, *From the Atlantic to the Urals: Negotiating Arms Control at the Stockholm Conference*, Pergamon-Brassey's, Washington, 1988.

<sup>73</sup>Jones, "How to Negotiate with Gorbachev's Team," *Orbis*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (1989), pp. 361, 366.

Minister Vorontsov, who headed the section on "The Military-Political Aspects of Security," reported that within his group "there was a most emphatic call for extensive information on our armed forces" and that "an end must be put at long last to an absurd situation where data on our armed forces known to the rest of the world are kept secret from the Soviet people, including those specializing in military-strategic problems."<sup>74</sup> In his speech, Shevardnadze argued that "one of the most unfavorable phenomena of the period of stagnation that had a negative effect on our international positions was the lack of coordination which sometimes existed between the military and policy areas."<sup>75</sup> To remedy this situation, he demanded more extensive sharing of information and greater interdepartmental cooperation in the national security sphere.

The staff members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs do not claim an exclusive right to know literally everything. However, they must know literally everything that applies to their sphere of competency. Major innovations in defense development should be verified at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to determine whether they correspond juridically to existing international agreements and to stated political positions.<sup>76</sup>

These statements reflected a sharpening of MFA-military tension over the provision of information in several areas, including the size and composition of the Soviet defense budget, Soviet conventional force levels in Europe, and possibly the size and location of Soviet chemical weapons stocks.

As far back as January 1983 and the Prague Political Declaration, the East came out in favor of NATO-WTO discussions on military budgets and related issues.<sup>77</sup> However, these proposals were not seriously pushed by the Pact until the unveiling of the new Gorbachev conventional arms control initiatives of the spring of 1986. In its Budapest Appeal of June 1986, the Pact called not only for force reductions, but for expanded confidence-building measures and an ongoing exchange of data on military forces in the proposed reductions area.<sup>78</sup>

In his message to the August 1987 UN Conference on Disarmament and Development, Gorbachev claimed that

<sup>74</sup>IA, No. 10, 1988, p. 42.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>77</sup>For the text, see *Pravda*, January 7, 1983. Previously, Soviet and Pact budget freeze proposals were made in the UN. See Abraham S. Becker, *Military Expenditure Limitation for Arms Control: Problems and Prospects*, Ballinger, Cambridge, 1977.

<sup>78</sup>*Pravda*, June 12, 1986.



we favor wider *glasnost* and openness regarding military activity and military expenditure and are persistently proposing a comparison of the military doctrines of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. This will also make it possible to effect a realistic comparison of military budgets with the aim of stopping their ballooning and combining them to the level of reasonable sufficiency.<sup>79</sup>

At the same conference the head of the Soviet delegation, Deputy Foreign Minister Petrovskii, provided previously unknown details about the composition of the Soviet defense budget. Speaking on behalf of Gorbachev, Petrovskii stated that the budget "reflects the spending by the USSR Ministry of Defense on maintaining personnel in the armed forces, material and technical supplies, military construction, pension funds and a number of other items."<sup>80</sup> However, he went on to say that research and development and procurement "are accounted for by other articles of the USSR state budget."

Throughout the rest of 1987 and 1988 the MFA promised that new data on the defense budget would be forthcoming, but it clearly ran into military resistance. In June 1988 Shevardnadze sent a letter to UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar in which he stated that the USSR would provide defense spending data in the standard UN format once certain practical questions had been resolved.<sup>81</sup>

By December 1988 Shevardnadze seemed increasingly concerned about the damage being done to Soviet diplomacy by the failure to live up to previous commitments. At the MFA conference dedicated to the implementation of the themes put forward in Gorbachev's recent UN speech, he referred to a "chronic vice" of Soviet policy, namely a gap between word and deed that undercut the Soviet image abroad. He went on to say that sometimes there was "palpable resistance" to high-level directives, and gave as an example the slow progress the USSR was making in revealing its military budget. He added that his ministry bore "full responsibility for failing to implement the declaration of the high-level leadership in the sphere of foreign policy. We must be imbued with the idea that nobody is allowed to depart from decrees proclaimed at a high level."<sup>82</sup> Obviously addressing the military, Shevardnadze stated that "we should be informed as to what has already been done in this area and what is left to do."

<sup>79</sup>"Appeal From the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee to the Participants in the International Conference on the Relationship Between Disarmament and Development," *Pravda*, August 26, 1987.

<sup>80</sup>*Izvestiia*, August 27, 1987.

<sup>81</sup>Christopher Wilkinson, "Soviet defence expenditure: past trends and prospects," *NATO Review*, April 1989, p. 18.

<sup>82</sup>*Vestnik MID*, No. 23, 1988.

As this remark suggested, publication of an expenditure figure was not just a matter of releasing information that was already known to the leadership, but of developing a method of compiling expenditures that were being charged to different accounts. This process clearly was controversial within the leadership. In May 1988 Akhromeev told a Moscow press conference that full details regarding Soviet military spending would not be made available for the next year or year and a half, or until after the expected price reform. Just as the military had invoked the long-term goal of a nuclear-free world in an attempt to delay the revising of its conventional doctrine, it now argued that *glasnost* in the budget sphere would depend upon the fulfillment of an ambitious part of the Soviet economic reform. As the worsening economic situation in the Soviet Union delayed announcement of the price reform, release of the defense budget data could be postponed indefinitely.

Meanwhile, MFA representatives continued to promise international audiences that the budget would be revealed. In an address in London in late January Oleg Grinevskii, a Soviet ambassador at large for security and arms control, stated that the Soviet Union wanted to publish its military budget but was unable to do so because factories producing military equipment were heavily subsidized and Soviet economic experts had not been able to establish the "real prices" of goods and services purchased by the military.<sup>83</sup>

In the end, Gorbachev appears to have engineered an awkward compromise that represented only a partial gain for the MFA. During his own visit to London in April 1989 the Soviet leader again pledged Soviet support for "openness with regard to military activities," and revealed that the new Supreme Soviet would publish data about the military budget. He added, however, that "the nonconvertibility of the ruble impedes an objective comparison" between Soviet and Western military expenditures and that "we are looking for a most adequate way of presenting our data."<sup>84</sup>

In his May 30 address to the Congress of People's Deputies Gorbachev finally disclosed a new official figure for the USSR's defense expenditures, without offering any explanation for how the pricing issue was resolved. Gorbachev's figure—77.3 billion rubles per year—was almost four times higher than the earlier official figure of 20.2 billion rubles, but nonetheless was greeted with widespread skepticism in the West. In a speech to the Congress of People's Deputies the

<sup>83</sup>Douglas Clark, "The Warsaw Pact Arms Cuts," *Report on the USSR*, February 17, 1989, p. 9.

<sup>84</sup>*Pravda*, April 8, 1989.

following week, Ryzhkov gave a more detailed breakdown of the defense budget. He claimed that of the 77.3 billion rubles, 32.6 billion would be spent on procurement, 15.3 billion on research and development, 20.2 billion on "upkeep," 4.6 billion on military construction, 2.3 billion on pensions, and 2.3 billion on other expenses.<sup>85</sup>

The outcome of the defense budget controversy appears to have been a partial setback for Shevardnadze and the MFA. MFA representatives defended the Gorbachev and Ryzhkov figures from foreign criticisms, but with little apparent enthusiasm. In contrast, the military establishment generally seemed pleased with the disclosures. In an article that appeared in *Pravda* on June 11, General Moiseev attacked those in the West who argued that the official figure of 77.3 billion rubles was too low to reflect reality.<sup>86</sup> In defending the figure, Moiseev ignored the fundamental question of "real" versus subsidized prices for both manpower and equipment. He argued, for example, that American enlisted men were paid 100 times more than their Soviet counterparts, while certain U.S. weapons were 9 to 11 times more expensive than comparable Soviet systems. These arguments, which were advanced without reference to the impending price reform, seemed to reflect Moiseev's conviction that the Soviet economy should continue to subsidize the military by providing underpaid manpower and underpriced equipment. Military publications steadfastly upheld the correctness of the 77.3 billion ruble figure, while active and retired officers suggested that there were security reasons for not providing a more detailed breakdown of defense spending.<sup>87</sup> In October 1989, for example, Akhromeev appeared on Soviet television with a civilian economist who complained about the ambiguity of the Ministry of Defense's spending data. Akhromeev passed a sheet of paper to the economist and said, "since you are a scientist, I shall make up this shortcoming straightaway. Here you have the expenditures since 1976. It's for you."<sup>88</sup> But Akhromeev would not allow the TV camera to focus on the paper. He also criticized the impatience of outsiders on military data issues, claiming that they wanted to do in four years what had taken many decades in other countries.

MFA-military differences over secrecy also appear to have played a certain (although difficult to pin down) role in the Soviet approach to conventional force reductions in Europe, and in particular in the Soviet

<sup>85</sup> *Pravda*, June 8, 1988.

<sup>86</sup> *Pravda*, June 11, 1989.

<sup>87</sup> Valerii M. Deynega, "The Defense Budget and Its Realization," *Kommunist vooruzhenykh sil*, No. 3, 1990.

<sup>88</sup> Moscow TV, October 9, 1989, in FBIS-SU, October 13, 1989. The economist on the program was Aleksei Kireev.

decision, which appears to have been made in late 1988, to downplay the role of data exchanges in the Vienna talks. In his address to the February 1987 Moscow forum "For a Nuclear-Free World, for the Survival of Mankind," Gorbachev suggested a new approach to arms reduction talks by proposing that the sides redress imbalances, "not by letting the one short of some elements build them up, but by having the one with more of them scale them down."<sup>89</sup> Subsequently, Soviet and Pact officials began to hint at an initial round of talks between the alliances to determine the areas of asymmetry.

In March 1988 the Foreign Ministers Committee of the Warsaw Pact issued an appeal to all NATO and CSCE-participating states regarding the impending conventional force reduction (and confidence- and security-building measures) talks in Vienna that called for the "holding as soon as possible [of] an exchange of data on the armed forces and conventional arms of the Warsaw Pact countries and NATO in Europe."<sup>90</sup> In the same month, U.S. Defense Secretary Carlucci and Defense Minister Yazov agreed that the United States and the Soviet Union would exchange basic information on forces and force structure.<sup>91</sup>

For the remainder of 1988, Soviet officials and the media stressed the need for a preliminary data exchange and on-site inspections. At the June 1988 Moscow summit, Gorbachev outlined to President Reagan a three-stage conventional arms control proposal that was to begin with a detailed exchange of data to establish which side was ahead in various force categories.<sup>92</sup> The following month, the Warsaw Pact PCC endorsed this approach.<sup>93</sup> In explaining the Eastern approach, MFA officials argued the importance of an *official* exchange of data rather than the tacit agreement (or even agreement to disagree) that had marked previous arms control negotiations. According to Shevardnadze, "one would think that there is a lot of such data going the round of the world. But it does not come from governments, and this robs it of the necessary legal force and of validity as proof. We insist therefore on exchanging official data through official channels."<sup>94</sup>

<sup>89</sup>*Pravda*, February 17, 1987.

<sup>90</sup>*Pravda*, March 31, 1988.

<sup>91</sup>The Soviet side later declined to carry out the exchange. Paul Wolfowitz, "A Little More Glasnost, Please, Marshal Akhromeev," *Washington Post*, July 27, 1989.

<sup>92</sup>Paul Lewis, "Soviet Offers to Adjust Imbalance of Conventional Forces in Europe," *New York Times*, June 24, 1988.

<sup>93</sup>"Warsaw Pact States' Statement on Talks on Armed Forces and Conventional Arms Reduction in Europe," *Pravda*, July 16, 1988.

Representatives of the military also expressed support for a first-stage data exchange and on-site inspection.<sup>95</sup>

By early 1989, however, the Soviet Union had dropped the data exchange idea from its conventional proposals. In his speech to the Vienna review conference on January 19, Shevardnadze stated that "the objective of the talks is not initial data but final levels of available armaments."<sup>96</sup> He then outlined a series of unilateral steps that the Soviet Union would take to provide the West with more information, including the release, by the end of January, of Warsaw Pact "numerical data on troops and armaments of the sides in Europe." When the CFE talks formally opened two months later, Shevardnadze proposed a three-stage arms control agreement, the first stage of which would, as in previous Soviet offers, eliminate imbalances and asymmetries. But he downplayed the importance of agreement on data, remarking that it was necessary "to avoid the sterile data debate" that had characterized the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) talks and that "it is not productive now to argue who is right and who is wrong" with regard to the numbers presented by NATO and the Warsaw Pact.<sup>97</sup>

Although the reasons for the shift in Soviet tactics remain obscure, military recalcitrance on the data issue probably played some role.<sup>98</sup> On January 30 the Pact's committee of defense ministers issued a comprehensive statement and accompanying data, the general conclusion of which was that in air and ground forces NATO and the Warsaw Pact were roughly equal, while in the naval sphere NATO had a

<sup>94</sup>Shevardnadze, "Towards A Safe World," *IA*, No. 9, 1988, pp. 12-13. This line was maintained until late 1988. In an interview with a French newspaper in October, Karpov stressed the importance of detailed exchange followed by on-site inspection: "We must start by exchanging information on the existing military forces on both sides: the number of troops and major weapons like tanks, artillery above a given caliber, and attack aircraft. We must also reach agreement on how far this exchange of figures will extend—to division, regiment or other levels." Interview, *Le Figaro*, October 19, 1988.

<sup>95</sup>See Yazov, "The Soviet Proposal for European Security," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, September 1988, p. 9; also Batenin, "European Disarmament: Ideas, Plans, and Prospects," *Pravda*, October 10, 1989.

<sup>96</sup>*Pravda*, January 20, 1989.

<sup>97</sup>*Pravda*, March 7, 1989.

<sup>98</sup>A bilateral data exchange remained Soviet policy in the chemical weapons negotiations. The Soviet Union proposed such an exchange in early 1989, after doubts were expressed in the West regarding Soviet claims that the USSR no longer had chemical weapons deployed outside its borders, and about the size of Soviet chemical weapons stocks. See the remarks by Viktor Karpov, reported by TASS, March 10, 1989, in FBIS-SU, same date; and the official "Statement by USSR Foreign Ministry Representative," *Pravda*, April 21, 1989.

twofold superiority.<sup>99</sup> The MFA welcomed the defense ministers' report and supported its conclusion that an overall East-West balance existed, but MFA officials may have been embarrassed by the heavy emphasis on naval forces, which suggested to some in the West that Eastern delegations to the upcoming CFE negotiations were not paying sufficient regard to the mandate for the talks worked out by the Vienna CSCE review conference (which excluded naval reductions from the talks). In a joint appearance with Colonel-General Bronislav Ormelichev, first deputy chief of the General Staff, Karpov stressed that the Vienna talks would "be conducted on the basis of data included in the mandate for these negotiations . . ." In contrast, general staff representatives such as Chervov continued to thunder against the exclusion of naval forces: ". . . this is simply absurd. With ground forces everything is now monitored—not a single division leaves its military camp without notification. . . . But at sea, for some reason, nothing is monitored."<sup>100</sup>

In addition to disputes about the role of secrecy in ongoing negotiations and policy issues, there were tensions between the military and the MFA about past decisions, and attempts by both institutions to release information that would place them in a favorable light. As the Soviet armed forces prepared to withdraw from Afghanistan, leading officers showed extreme wariness about being blamed for the war, and thus went out of their way to make clear that the decision to invade was made by civilians. For example, Army General Valentin Varennikov claimed that Ustinov ignored the advice of his top military advisers, notably Marshals Akhromeev and Ogarkov, in deciding in favor of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. (The decision apparently was taken by a small group within the Politburo that included, in addition to Ustinov, Brezhnev, Suslov, and Gromyko).<sup>101</sup> In the same week that Varennikov's remarks appeared, Shevardnadze gave an interview in which he distanced himself from the events of 1979: "The decision to send troops into [Afghanistan] was made behind closed doors by a few of the country's top leaders. As a candidate member of the Central Committee Politburo at the time, I—just like some of my comrades and colleagues—was simply presented with the fact."<sup>102</sup>

<sup>99</sup>"Statement of the Warsaw Pact Defense Ministers Committee 'On the Correlation of Warsaw Pact and North Atlantic Alliance Free Strengths and Armaments in Europe and Adjoining Waters.'" *Pravda*, January 30, 1989.

<sup>100</sup>*Krasnaia zvezda*, February 2, 1989.

<sup>101</sup>"Afghanistan: Summing Up," *Ogonek*, No. 12, 1989.

<sup>102</sup>*Izvestiia*, March 23, 1989.

Shevardnadze repeated this explanation in his October 1989 report on foreign policy to the Supreme Soviet, as well as claimed that the war was immoral.<sup>103</sup> In the same report, Shevardnadze also criticized military secrecy regarding the Krasnoyarsk radar. He stated that the radar was, as the United States long had charged, a breach of the ABM treaty. But he claimed that it took four years of investigation to ascertain this fact, during which the existence of this glaring violation undercut what he called the Soviet "struggle to preserve the ABM treaty as the foundation for strategic stability."<sup>104</sup> He further hinted at military resistance to the decision to dismantle the Krasnoyarsk facility, noting that "objections were raised—our interests were being abandoned, people said." Gorbachev had assured President Bush in a letter sent in late September 1989 that the Soviet Union would dismantle the radar, but American officials were able to confirm that this process began only in May 1990, shortly before Gorbachev's visit to the United States.<sup>105</sup>

#### VERIFICATION AND NEW SECURITY INSTITUTIONS

Soviet governments traditionally have been suspicious of intrusive or cooperative verification measures such as on-site inspection. In the 1950s and 1960s, Khrushchev accepted the principle of on-site inspections, but rejected all concrete Western inspection proposals as too intrusive. Under Brezhnev, the Soviet Union insisted that inspections were not necessary for monitoring the SALT agreements, which could be accomplished by "national-technical" means. Until well into the 1980s Soviet governments argued that intrusive measures were at best unnecessary and at worst Western attempts to legitimize espionage. As recently as 1984 Chernenko dismissed a U.S. chemical weapons proposal as "an obvious desire to legalize, under the pretext of verification, U.S. intelligence gathering activity."<sup>106</sup>

This stance began to change in 1985. Gorbachev expressed concern with what he called the "deliberate distortion" in the West of the Soviet position on verification, and Soviet officials began to speak much more positively about both cooperative measures of verification and

<sup>103</sup>This assessment appears not to have been fully shared by some members of the defense establishment. Akhromeev, for example, told an interviewer: "I have my opinion about whether this was immoral or not . . ." *Time*, November 13, 1989.

<sup>104</sup>*Pravda*, October 24, 1989.

<sup>105</sup>Don Oberdorfer and Ann Devroy, "Soviets Dismantle Disputed Radar," *Washington Post*, May 29, 1990.

<sup>106</sup>*Pravda*, May 5, 1984.

confidence-building measures.<sup>107</sup> Moving beyond the mere defense of the USSR's credibility, in August 1985 the Soviet leaders launched, in conjunction with the unilateral test ban declared by Gorbachev, a campaign to discredit the United States on the verification issue. Whereas previously the Soviet Union had charged that the United States was pursuing arms control as a pretext for legalized espionage—a position that implicitly acknowledged U.S. readiness to go through with the arms control arguments to achieve its ends in the field of espionage—it now began to argue that the United States was hiding behind the issue of verification to avoid having to conclude arms control agreements. The task for the Soviet Union was to “unmask” the United States by embracing inspection and verification measures that were as stringent as or went beyond those demanded by the United States. As Shevardnadze remarked in a speech welcoming Gorbachev's plan for a nuclear-free world, “proposals on verification to the point of mutual on-site inspections deny the last arguments to those who would like to avoid a [moratorium on testing]. Verification, and dependable verification, is viewed by us as the more important and essential element of measures to eliminate nuclear and other weapons.”<sup>108</sup>

In the spring of 1986 Soviet policy entered a new stage, as the USSR began taking unilateral steps in the verification field to heighten the pressure on the United States. In May 1986 the Soviet Academy of Sciences concluded an agreement with a private U.S. organization, the Natural Resources of Defense Council (NRDC), to set up seismic monitoring facilities near Semipalatinsk, the main Soviet nuclear test site, to verify the continuation of the test moratorium. In July 1989 the NRDC and the Academy of Sciences conducted another joint experiment, this time aboard Soviet naval vessels in the Black Sea, to prove that effective verification of nuclear-armed cruise missiles was possible.<sup>109</sup>

In April 1989 a Group for the Public Monitoring of the Reduction of Soviet Armed Forces and Armaments was founded to “verify” the unilateral troop reduction and withdrawals announced by Gorbachev at the UN the previous December. High-level support for the formation of this group came from Shevardnadze who, in his December 1988 speech to the MFA on the implementation of the themes outlined

<sup>107</sup>See Shevardnadze's address to the UN General Assembly of October 24, 1985, and Gorbachev's press conference on Soviet television, November 21, 1985. In May 1987 Gorbachev reportedly told Shultz that “intelligence is in general constructive, provides a stabilizing element in relations, and helps prevent rash political and military actions.” From a State Department memorandum, quoted in R. Jeffrey Smith, “What's Gorbachev's Game?” *Washington Post*, July 30, 1989.

<sup>108</sup>TASS, January 16, 1986.

<sup>109</sup>See the terse MOD announcement, TASS, July 7, 1989, in FBIS-SU, July 10, 1989.



Gorbachev's speech to the UN, suggested that the MFA look into the question of monitoring "in order to establish goodwill."<sup>110</sup> One of the tasks of the group, which was headed by Kokoshin, was "to maintain contacts with representatives of the public abroad" and to "invite foreign public figures and parliamentarians" to participate in "selected actions" with the aim, it appears, not only of increasing the credibility of the Soviet reductions, but of stepping up the pressure on Western governments for reciprocal responses to the USSR's unilateral moves.<sup>111</sup>

The Soviet military was probably divided and somewhat ambivalent about the exchange of military information as an instrument of public diplomacy. Many countries had cancelled military exchanges with the Soviet Union after the 1979 invasion of Afghanistan. After a Soviet submarine ran aground in Swedish territorial waters in 1981, Sweden cancelled military contacts with the Soviet Union, which were not resumed until almost six years later. U.S. Secretary of Defense Weinberger ruled out exchanges with the Soviet military in response to the 1984 shooting by Soviet troops in Berlin of a U.S. Army major. Many in the Soviet military no doubt felt that these measures were unjustified, and welcomed the revival and expansion of official military-to-military contacts under Gorbachev.<sup>112</sup> These contacts also helped to counterbalance MFA activism by giving the military its own sources of information and points of contact with foreign governments.

But at least some in the military probably had misgivings about the unilateral opening up of closed facilities, especially to nonofficial Western groups. Visits by such groups are at a minimum complicated and time-consuming to arrange. It is noteworthy that the NDRC group was not permitted to remain near Semipalatinsk once nuclear testing was

<sup>110</sup>"On the Practical Tasks of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Implementing the Ideas and Points Contained in the Speech by M. S. Gorbachev in the UN on 7 December 1988," *Vestnik MID*, No. 23, 1988.

<sup>111</sup>See the interview with S. M. Rogov, deputy chairman of the group, in *Krasnaia zvezda*, May 16, 1989. In addition to its verification tasks, the group was charged with looking after the welfare of soldiers dismissed from the military as a result of the unilateral reductions. Originally this was a secondary task that may have reflected an attempt to win military support for its activities. However, with the changes of government in Eastern Europe and the conclusion of agreements providing for the total withdrawal of Soviet forces from Hungary and Czechoslovakia, the public relations focus of the group lost its rationale. The group became less active, and began focusing almost exclusively on helping the military adjust to the new situation in the Soviet Union. (Information based on interviews.)

<sup>112</sup>For a positive assessment of this aspect of *glasnost* in the military sphere, see the interview with General Gareev, *Argumenty i fakty*, No. 39, 1988.

resumed. The Soviet navy also was reportedly unenthusiastic about the 1989 cruise missile verification experiment.<sup>113</sup>

## NATIONALITY AND INTERNAL ORDER PROBLEMS

In theory, the role of the foreign ministry in nationality and internal order problems is limited to special circumstances, such as coordinating the international relief effort following the December 1987 earthquake in Armenia.<sup>114</sup> In practice, however, Shevardnadze has played a major role in these questions—as a domestic political adviser, as a Georgian, and as the official in the Soviet government most concerned with the USSR's external image and the international ramifications of disorder and repression at home. Shevardnadze also has called for upgrading the role of the foreign ministries of the union republics, although it remains unclear how far he would like to see them go in pursuing foreign policies truly independent of Moscow.<sup>115</sup>

Civil-military differences over the nationality problem were brought into the open by the "Tbilisi massacre" and the debates concerning its causes. On the night of April 9, 1989, MVD and regular army troops brutally suppressed a nationalist demonstration in the main square of Tbilisi. Nineteen people died, some from being beaten with shovels, others from exposure to toxic gas.<sup>116</sup> Most of those killed were women.

The political and military authorities in Moscow claimed that the decision to use troops against the demonstrators was taken by the republican party leadership, without the knowledge of the Politburo or responsible ministries. Shevardnadze, who along with Central Committee Secretary Georgii Razumovskii was sent to Tbilisi to investigate and to calm the situation, publicly supported the line promulgated in Moscow and criticized the local political leadership. But Shevardnadze subsequently used his personal influence to assist the Georgians in uncovering and publicizing the role of the military leadership in the April events. The MFA also helped to internationalize the controversy

<sup>113</sup>The experiment reportedly was "sold to Gorbachev" by Soviet scientists, but was not regarded as very successful, public claims to the contrary. The results of the experiment reportedly contributed to the Soviet decision to downplay the cruise missile issue in Shevardnadze's September 1989 talks with President Bush and Secretary of State Baker. (Information based on discussions with a Soviet researcher.)

<sup>114</sup>"In Moskau Streitereien wegen der Folgen des Bebens in Armenien," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, December 22, 1988.

<sup>115</sup>See *Vestnik MID*, No. 23, 1989, pp. 59–60, for cooperation between the MFA and the republican ministries.

<sup>116</sup>Louis Ember, "Evidence shows Soviets used toxic gas at Tbilisi," *Chemical & Engineering News*, June 12, 1989, p. 20.

by allowing teams of French and American doctors to go to Tbilisi to conduct an independent investigation.<sup>117</sup> Shevardnadze's outrage at the Tbilisi events and his determination to expose those responsible for it inevitably led to conflict with the military, which deeply resented being blamed for what it saw as a political problem.

The Tbilisi operation was headed by Colonel General Igor Rodionov, the commander of the Transcaucasian Military District, who in turn took orders from Defense Minister Yazov and his Deputy General Kochetov. Rodionov's role in the massacre was heatedly debated at the first Congress of People's Deputies, to which he himself had been elected—ironically as a delegate from Georgia. Rodionov was attacked by other Georgian delegates, who branded him a murderer and demanded his ouster from the congress.<sup>118</sup> In response, Rodionov lashed out at the political leadership, whose methods he compared to those of the Stalin period: "Here we are talking about how bad 1937 was, but I think it is worse now than in 1937. Now people can talk about you on television, write about you in newspapers, and the mass media can defame you however they wish without justification. . . ." In addition to questioning the methods of his opponents, Rodionov attacked the political leadership for failing to head off the events that led to military involvement.

Here is the result of the neglect: Neglect the political situation in the republic for a year before the crisis, take absolutely no effective measures, do not utilize the authority and opportunities granted to you, and then avoid responsibility for criminal activity, draw the Army in, and place all the responsibility on the highest political and military leadership in the country, on the eve of our congress, and then say nothing yourself, deny everything, and falsify everything that happened.<sup>119</sup>

While these remarks were directed at the Georgian party leadership, they probably also concealed a measure of resentment toward those in the national leadership, notably Shevardnadze, who were most sympathetic to the Georgians' plight.

Rodionov won a standing ovation in the congress from party conservatives for his defense of his actions, but was subjected to harsh criticisms in several postmortems on the Tbilisi events. In June 1989 an investigating commission of the Georgian Supreme Soviet issued a preliminary report that concluded that the Ministry of Defense in

<sup>117</sup>Colin Norman, "U.S. Physicians Probe Deaths in Soviet Georgia," *Science*, June 9, 1989.

<sup>118</sup>See especially the remarks of T. V. Gamkrelidze, *Izvestiia*, June 1, 1989.

<sup>119</sup>*Izvestiia*, June 1, 1989.

Moscow was "well aware" of the plans to use military forces against the demonstrators and that General Rodionov had lied to the republican authorities about the extent and nature of the force he intended to use.<sup>120</sup>

Subsequent and more comprehensive investigations of the Tbilisi events continued to implicate Rodionov and his immediate superiors, but also pointed to high-level political intrigue in Moscow involving Shevardnadze and his hardline rivals Ligachev and KGB head Viktor Chebrikov. In October 1989 the investigating commission of the Georgian Supreme Soviet issued its final report in which it concluded that the orders to use army troops to crush the demonstrators had come from Moscow, and not Tbilisi as the Soviet government continued to insist. Following a Politburo meeting on April 7 chaired by Ligachev and another meeting the following day chaired by Chebrikov, Chebrikov and Yazov reportedly ordered Rodionov to take military action.<sup>121</sup> The damaging revelations about Chebrikov's role probably facilitated his ouster from the Politburo at the September 1989 Central Committee plenum. In what was clearly a gesture to the Georgians, Rodionov also was forced to resign from his post in the Caucasus.<sup>122</sup> But the military leadership demonstrated continuing support for him in his dispute with the political authorities by appointing him to command the prestigious Voroshilov Military Academy of the General Staff.<sup>123</sup>

With Chebrikov and Rodionov more or less out of the picture, the focus of the controversy surrounding the Tbilisi events shifted to Ligachev. Rivalry between Ligachev and Shevardnadze long predated the Tbilisi events, and may have played a role in the discussion of these issues. In June 1987 Ligachev had toured Georgia and delivered a series of speeches in which he blasted the economic performance of the republic, and criticized corruption, discrimination in higher education against Russians and in favor of native Georgians, and many other problems.<sup>124</sup> Ligachev did not mention Shevardnadze by name, but he

<sup>120</sup>*Zaria vostoka*, June 11, 1989.

<sup>121</sup>David Remnick, "Report Says Moscow Sent Troops to Georgia," *Washington Post*, October 12, 1989.

<sup>122</sup>Quentin Peel, "Georgian massacre general ousted," *Financial Times*, September 9, 1989. The announcement of Rodionov's ouster coincided with a well-publicized visit to Georgia by Shevardnadze, in which he adopted a very conciliatory line toward the local nationalists and discussed the question of "restoring trust and mutual understanding and strengthening the traditional relations between the republic's working people and the district's servicemen." *Izvestiia*, September 8, 1989.

<sup>123</sup>Sergei Zamascikov, "A New Job for General Rodionov," *RFE/RL Daily Report*, February 20, 1990.

<sup>124</sup>See the speeches in Tbilisi, texts in *Zaria vostoka*, June 3, June 4, in FBIS-SU, June 18, June 24, 1987, and the abbreviated text in *Pravda*, June 4, 1987.

undoubtedly knew that these attacks would be seen as directed at him. A year later, Ligachev reacted strongly to Shevardnadze's well-publicized remarks to the July foreign ministry conference, stating that certain ideas "merely sow confusion in the minds of the Soviet people and our friends abroad," rejecting Shevardnadze's claims that "all-human" interests had superseded the class conflict, and arguing that "we start from the class character of international relations" and that there must be no "artificial slowing down of the social and national-liberation struggle."<sup>125</sup> There is no concrete evidence that Ligachev instigated the April 1989 events as a provocation directed at Shevardnadze, but several deputies hinted at this possibility in speeches to the Congress of People's Deputies.<sup>126</sup>

Speculation about Ligachev's role in the Tbilisi events intensified in late 1989, as the second Congress of People's Deputies convened and prepared to hear the final report by the investigating commission set up at the first congress. At the opening session on December 12, a member of the commission charged that the decision to use force against the demonstrators was taken at a meeting of the Politburo chaired by Ligachev.<sup>127</sup> Two weeks later, Anatolii Sobchak delivered the full report of the commission. It differed significantly from the report issued by the Georgian parliament two months earlier, but still criticized many leading military and political figures for their involvement in the crisis. It continued to uphold the Moscow line that the republican leadership took the decision to use force, but confirmed that a meeting of Politburo members chaired by Ligachev decided to assist the Georgian authorities with interior ministry and army troops. The commission charged that by issuing orders directly to the organs of state power, the party—Ligachev—violated the decisions of the 19th party conference and the norms of the emerging rule-of-law state. The commission was far harsher on Rodionov, whom it accused of using toxic gas, misrepresenting the security threat posed by the Georgian demonstrators, and other "gross violations of law."<sup>128</sup> Shortly after Sobchak finished his report, the Chief Military Prosecutor, Aleksandr Katusev, delivered what was in effect a military rebuttal. Katusev

<sup>125</sup>*Pravda*, August 6, 1988.

<sup>126</sup>Roy Medvedev and Nikolai Petrushenko, cited in Julia Wishnevsky, "Shevardnadze Said to Have Threatened to Resign in Dispute Over Tbilisi Commission," *RFE/RL Daily Report*, January 12, 1990.

<sup>127</sup>Remarks by Vilen Tolpezhnikov, cited in "Congress of People's Deputies Reconvenes," *RFE/RL Daily Report*, December 12, 1989. Elizabeth Fuller, "Official and Unofficial Investigations into Tbilisi Massacre Yield Contradictory Results," *Report on the USSR*, No. 44, 1989, pp. 26-29.

<sup>128</sup>*Izvestiia*, December 30, 1989.

claimed that the Georgians themselves were responsible for the deaths in Tbilisi and that the military had acted legally and responsibly.

The congress delegates wildly applauded Katusev, much as they had welcomed Rodionov's remarks earlier in the year. This reaction suggested that the congress might fail to condemn the use of force in Tbilisi, thereby in effect absolving Rodionov and the military of any wrongdoing. Deeply disturbed by this possibility, Shevardnadze threatened, at a meeting of the Politburo that was held shortly after the two speeches were delivered, to resign his party and state posts. Gorbachev averted this outcome by making an impassioned speech to the congress calling for the passage of a resolution condemning the use of violence. The resolution eventually did pass, but was far milder than the findings in the Sobchak commission's report seemed to justify.<sup>129</sup> Shevardnadze subsequently criticized both Rodionov and Katusev, implying that Rodionov had behaved worse than many tsarist viceroys, and accusing Katusev of persistently misinforming him about the military's use of gas and shovels in Tbilisi.<sup>130</sup> Katusev in turn replied in a harshly worded letter that appeared in *Sovetskaiia Rossiia*.<sup>131</sup>

In the aftermath of the Georgian events, the military stepped back from involvement in nationality problems, and made clear that it wanted to minimize its role as an internal police force. The political leadership in turn decided to shift resources from the military to the troops of the interior ministry.<sup>132</sup> However, the worsening of the nationality problem in early 1990 forced the military to abandon its hands-off policy and to take a more decisive role in countering secessionist movements and ethnic strife. Whereas for much of 1989 the military was on the defensive over the nationality issue, largely because of its disastrous handling of the Georgian events, in early 1990 it began taking a much more aggressive stance, again distinguishing its positions somewhat from those of the government. Even though all the necessary parliamentary procedures had not been followed, in January 1990 Soviet forces intervened in Azerbaijan to crush nationalist forces. In Baku to direct the operation, Defense Minister Yazov told reporters that its objective was to destroy the organizational structure of the local popular front. The Foreign Ministry spokesman had announced

<sup>129</sup>Wishnevsky, "Shevardnadze Said to Have Threatened to Resign in Dispute Over Tbilisi Commission," *RFE/RL Daily Report*, January 12, 1990.

<sup>130</sup>*Ogonek*, No. 11, 1990.

<sup>131</sup>March 25, 1990; in FBIS-SU, March 26, 1990. See also the interview with Katusev in *Krasnaia zvezda*, April 13, 1990.

<sup>132</sup>Bill Keller, "Soviet Lawmakers Vote a Strike Ban and Allow Army to Relieve Armenia," *New York Times*, October 4, 1989.

the more limited and less political objective of quelling ethnic violence between Azerbaijanis and Armenians.

The military also was heavily involved in the Lithuanian crisis of early 1990. In view of Gorbachev's apparent determination to slow or frustrate altogether the breakaway of the Baltic republics, it is unclear to what extent the military independently exerted pressure on the civilian leadership on this issue. But it is noteworthy that one of the earliest moves by the Soviet authorities was against Lithuanian army deserters, even though the Lithuanians were technically in violation of many other Soviet laws as well. Officials also disclosed that the military had prepared plans for a full-scale military invasion, even as Shevardnadze continued to assure international audiences that the Soviet Union would not resort to force in the confrontation.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>133</sup>Craig R. Whitney, "Military's Voice Being Heard on Lithuania, a Soviet Aide Says," *New York Times*, April 15, 1990.

#### IV. GERMANY AND EASTERN EUROPE

Although Shevardnadze subsequently denied that the MFA was surprised by the 1989 upheavals in Eastern Europe,<sup>1</sup> the evidence suggests that like most other observers he did not foresee the collapse of the Communist order and the rapid reunification of Germany. In his speech to the 1988 MFA conference, he characterized the world socialist system as "our great and invaluable heritage and at the same time a heritage of humanity as a factor of peace and progress."<sup>2</sup> Echoing Gorbachev, he stressed that the Soviet Union would respect the independence of the East European states, but suggested that a hands-off approach actually would strengthen socialist unity and impart new dynamism to the socialist community.

At the same time, Shevardnadze became an increasingly strong proponent of the dissolution of the military blocs and the elimination of all foreign military bases. As has been seen, he seems to have concluded that the Soviet Union could enjoy greater security at lower costs if the United States pulled back militarily from the borders of the USSR. Shevardnadze appeared to assume—rather naively as can be seen in retrospect—that the dissolution of the blocs was compatible with the maintenance of Communist systems in Eastern Europe and the survival of a separate East German state. As recently as October 1989 he told the Supreme Soviet that the USSR was committed to eliminating foreign military bases by the year 2000. In the same speech, he claimed that the USSR was more secure "than it had been in the 1950s and 1960s, and that it had overcome the "weakness complex" that shaped the behavior of previous leaderships.<sup>3</sup>

Shevardnadze also did not appear to be alarmed by the change of government that took place in Poland in August 1989. In his speech to the UN General Assembly in September, he admitted that the Soviet leadership was "not enthusiastic" about the electoral setback of the Polish Communists, but expressed confidence that they would overcome their crisis. He also argued that new thinking should make it possible for a Communist to head a Western country, much as non-

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<sup>1</sup>See, for example, his forceful interview in *Ogonek*, No. 11, 1990, in which he dismissed talks that the MFA was caught unawares as "rubbish."

<sup>2</sup>*IA*, No. 10, 1988, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup>*Prauda*, October 24, 1989.



Communist forces had taken power in Poland.<sup>4</sup> The following month he gave an interview to the former Polish dissident Adam Michnik in which he called for a broadening of Soviet-Polish relations and an exchange of views and experiences between Poland's emerging pluralist institutions and the Soviet Union's popular fronts and unofficial organizations, some of which he acknowledged were still illegal or in conflict with Communist regulations.<sup>5</sup>

The opening of the Berlin Wall the following month and the ensuing collapse of the East German state appear to have finally forced Shevardnadze and Gorbachev to reconsider the assumptions that had shaped their European policy and to begin trying to slow the pace of change. Gorbachev himself signalled the change when he declared in a meeting with French Foreign Minister Dumas that "it is not the time to destroy the established international political and economic institutions. Let them transform themselves. . . . let them find themselves a niche in the new situation and interact."<sup>6</sup> Henceforth Soviet officials stressed the transformation rather than the dissolution of the blocs.

The following month Shevardnadze visited NATO headquarters in Brussels for talks with Secretary General Manfred Woerner. On the same trip he delivered a major speech to the Political Commission of the European Parliament, in which he called for a "profound alteration of the relations between NATO and the Warsaw Pact and a change in the very nature of these organizations."<sup>7</sup> He also claimed that notwithstanding the internal changes in Eastern Europe, "all these countries have confirmed their obligations as allies under the Warsaw Pact"—a step he saw as "an important prerequisite for preserving stability in present conditions." Deputy Foreign Minister Aboimov, the MFA's point man on Eastern Europe, argued that the Pact should be maintained as "a necessary means of preserving stability in Europe until new structures of security are established there for protecting the common European home."<sup>8</sup>

Despite these efforts to put a positive face on the changes in Europe, some military officers and civilian officials criticized the loss of Eastern Europe, which they saw as both a blow to Marxism-Leninism as an ideology and a loss for the security of the Soviet state. Aleksandr Prokhanov, a conservative author known for his close ties to the general staff, wrote in *Literaturnaia Rossiia* that "the entire geopolitical

<sup>4</sup>*Pravda*, September 27, 1989.

<sup>5</sup>*Gazeta Wyborcza*, October 27-29, 1989, in FBIS-SU, October 31, 1989.

<sup>6</sup>*Pravda*, November 15, 1989.

<sup>7</sup>*Pravda*, December 20, 1989.

<sup>8</sup>*Argumenty i fakty*, No. 7, 1990.

structure of Eastern Europe, the building of which cost our country dearly, tumbled down overnight. . . . The sentimental theory of 'our common European home' has brought about the collapse of Eastern Europe's communist parties, a change in the state structures, and imminent reunification of the two Germanys. . . . As the color and contours of Europe's political map are changing, the bones of Russian infantrymen stir in their unknown graves."<sup>9</sup> At the February 1990 Central Committee plenum, Ligachev argued that

it would be unforgivably shortsighted and mistaken not to see that a Germany with vast economic and military potential has begun to loom on the world horizon. Real efforts are needed on the part of the world community and all the world's democratic forces in good time to prevent the question of revising the postwar borders from being raised and—let us be blunt and say it—prevent a prewar Munich.<sup>10</sup>

V. I. Brovikov, the Soviet ambassador to Poland (and thus nominally Shevardnadze's subordinate within the MFA) was even harsher. The West, "while heaping praise on us, is crowing over the collapse of the 'colossus with feet of clay' and the demise of Communism and world socialism. Yet we are trying to present all this as a dizzying success for *perestroika* and the new thinking in international affairs."<sup>11</sup>

No military officer was as sharp as Brovikov in his public condemnation of Shevardnadze's policies, but some pointed out the danger to Soviet security posed by the new situation in Europe. Lieutenant General Igor Sergeev, the deputy head of the Strategic Rocket Forces, told an interviewer that the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary would undermine parity with NATO.<sup>12</sup> General Boris Gromov, commander of the Kiev military district and a hero of the Afghan war, wrote that the United States was seeking military superiority, and that "the forces of reaction have not abandoned their efforts to destabilize conditions in the world, and especially in the socialist countries."<sup>13</sup> In an interview in *Red Star* published a few days after the conclusion of the February plenum, General Moiseev criticized the draft party platform adopted by the plenum. He focused primarily on what he regarded as the domestic policy shortcomings of the document, but also criticized the draft for failing to contain a "political

<sup>9</sup>Aleksandr Prokhanov, "Tragedy," *Literaturnaia Rossiia*, January 5, 1990.

<sup>10</sup>*Pravda*, February 7, 1990.

<sup>11</sup>*Pravda*, February 7, 1990.

<sup>12</sup>"My otvykil razoruzhat'stia," *Moskovskie novosti*, No. 8, 1990.

<sup>13</sup>Quoted in Stephen Foye, "Rumblings In the Soviet Military," *RFE/RL Daily Report*, March 6, 1990.

assessment" of recent developments in Eastern Europe and the Warsaw Pact. Moiseev alluded in particular to the hardships faced by soldiers and their families returning from Eastern Europe, but unlike some of his colleagues did not address the security implications of the recent changes.<sup>14</sup>

Shevardnadze responded to these criticisms in several ways. He himself adopted a fairly hard line on the German question, insisting that a united Germany become neutral and floating the idea of an international referendum on the issue.<sup>15</sup> Whereas in the past Shevardnadze almost always either aligned his position with Gorbachev's or foreshadowed shifts by Gorbachev toward a more radical stance, on the German issue Shevardnadze appeared to lag, making impractical suggestions and criticizing the Germans in sharper terms than Gorbachev.

Shevardnadze also denied that Eastern Europe had ever really been the Soviet Union's to "lose." In his reply to Ligachev at the February plenum, he argued that *perestroika* was not responsible for "the destruction of Europe's political structure. It was destroyed by the will of the people who no longer wished to reconcile themselves with coercion. It is at the end of the forties and not in 1985 that the undermining of belief in socialism began. . . ." <sup>16</sup> In tracing the illegitimacy of the Communist order back to the 1940s, Shevardnadze contradicted his own earlier pronouncements regarding the legal, political, and ideological bases for a socialist community. In other statements Shevardnadze went as far as to blame Eastern Europe's breakaway on opponents of reform:

Perhaps the "accusers" should think about the possibility that it was they themselves who accelerated the collapse of the "socialist camp." Through their ideological conservatism, their reluctance to understand another people's feelings, their mania for molding their lives according to their own ideas and seeing sovereign states as "buffers," as one true internationalist put it.<sup>17</sup>

Shevardnadze also blamed Soviet difficulties in Eastern Europe on ambassadors such as Brovikov who had failed to report objectively on conditions in their host countries or to develop contacts with a broad range of society. The MFA followed up these criticisms by announcing, in April 1990, the removal of five of the six Warsaw Pact country

<sup>14</sup>*Krasnaia zvezda*, February 11, 1990.

<sup>15</sup>Francis X. Clines, "World Vote Urged By Shevardnadze on German Unity," *New York Times*, February 3, 1990.

<sup>16</sup>TASS International Service, February 6, 1990, FBIS-SU, February 7, 1990.

<sup>17</sup>*Ogonek*, No. 11, 1990.

ambassadors and their replacement by professional diplomats with experience in Western countries and familiarity with parliamentary systems.<sup>18</sup>

While Shevardnadze came under attack for developments in Europe, he also suffered politically from the general disillusionment in the Soviet Union with the reform process and the failure of *perestroika* to produce economic results for the consumer. Shevardnadze's response was to revert to a theme that had been present in MFA statements since 1987, and to emphasize the "profitability" of Soviet foreign policy. In March 1990 he called a press briefing at the MFA to announce the formation of a special MFA commission of experts that would attempt to maximize the results for the Soviet economy of recent arms reduction agreements and unilateral decisions. He claimed that foreign policy was one of the "most profitable 'production units,'" but that an ineffective conversion policy had hindered the realization of these profits.<sup>19</sup> In an interview with *Ogonek* that appeared at approximately the same time, he claimed that the USSR's present foreign policy was "the most profitable of sectors" in that it had reduced the costs of maintaining the Soviet armed forces, saved costs associated with tensions along the Sino-Soviet border, ended the war in Afghanistan, and reduced "unnecessary programs" through agreements with the United States. Once again trying to place his "accusers" on the defensive, Shevardnadze argued that if the consumer had not yet benefited from these foreign policy changes, it was because conservative forces "simply did not believe that we would manage to conclude these agreements" and thus were unprepared for conversion.<sup>20</sup>

By the spring of 1990 Shevardnadze appeared to have recovered somewhat from the shock caused by the upheavals of 1989 and was beginning to articulate a vision for Europe that combined elements of his pre-1989 stance, with its simple focus on denuclearization and the dissolution of the blocs, with new themes calculated to preserve Soviet interests in Europe under post-Communist circumstances. One of the sharpest changes was in the assessment of the role of the United States as a European power. Shevardnadze acknowledged that until "quite recently our aim was to oust the Americans from Europe at any price," but added that this policy had changed, that the Soviet Union now regarded an American presence in Europe as vital for stability.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup>*Izvestiia*, April 15, 1990.

<sup>19</sup>*Izvestiia*, March 7, 1990.

<sup>20</sup>*Ogonek*, No. 11, 1990.

<sup>21</sup>*Izvestiia*, February 20, 1990.

In speeches, articles and interviews he also outlined plans for new all-European institutions, extensive disarmament, and a new pattern of relations between the Soviet Union and the formerly Communist countries of Eastern Europe. He called for the formation of a Greater Europe Council composed of the heads of the 35 CSCE participating states that would meet every two years. The agenda for the council would be prepared by a committee of foreign ministers that would meet once or twice each year. The ministerial committee in turn would be served by a permanent coordinating commission with a permanent headquarters in a European city. Other elements of Shevardnadze's emerging design for Europe included a European "war risk reduction center," a verification coordinating center, and a system of permanent ties between NATO and the Warsaw Pact.<sup>22</sup>

In the disarmament sphere, Shevardnadze continued to press for rapid progress, using arguments similar to those he employed before the 1989 changes. He revealed that he was one of the first Soviet officials to argue for acceptance of the American CFE proposal, put forward at the February Ottawa Open Skies conference, that would allow the United States and the Soviet Union each to keep 195,000 men in the central zone and the United States to keep an additional 30,000 troops in Britain, Italy, Greece, and Turkey. Other Soviet officials, including some in the MFA, apparently resisted this proposal out of concern of conservative reaction to "yet another concession."<sup>23</sup> Shevardnadze argued that the proposal was actually quite favorable from the Soviet perspective, in that it would limit the Americans to 30,000 troops in Europe while allowing the Soviet Union to maintain its "much bigger military contingents outside its central European territories."<sup>24</sup>

The Soviet Union also accelerated the timetable for the removal of all foreign troops from Europe. In mid-December 1989 an MFA official reiterated the official Soviet view that all foreign bases be eliminated by the year 2000.<sup>25</sup> When the CFE talks reconvened in January, however, the Soviet representative suggested the withdrawal of all foreign

<sup>22</sup>For the most comprehensive exposition of Shevardnadze's views on a future European order, see his article in *NATO's Sixteen Nations*, May 1990; also his speech to the Canadian parliament, *Pravda*, February 16, 1990.

<sup>23</sup>*Ogonek*, No. 11, 1990.

<sup>24</sup>Galina Sidorova, "The Arithmetic of Open Skies," *New Times*, No. 9, 1990. For a report from Ottawa indicating consternation in the Soviet delegation, see Thomas L. Friedman, "Moscow Accepts U.S. Advantage of 30,000 Soldiers Across Europe," *New York Times*, February 14, 1990. There were many on the U.S. side, including Senator Sam Nunn, who agreed with the logic of Shevardnadze's position and thought that the Ottawa compromise was a poor deal from the U.S. perspective. See Michael R. Gordon, "Bush Draws Fire Over Troop Cuts," *New York Times*, March 1, 1990.

<sup>25</sup>See Deputy Foreign Minister Petrovskii's report to the UN of December 15, *New York Times* December 16, 1989.

forces from Europe within five years of the conclusion of an agreement—in effect by as early as 1995.<sup>26</sup> This clearly was a response to developments in Eastern Europe, notably the agreements with Hungary and Czechoslovakia for the withdrawal of all foreign troops by the end of 1991 and the likelihood that all Soviet troops would soon leave a united Germany.

It remains to be seen how successful Shevardnadze will be in translating his vision of Europe into reality, or even how serious he will be in pursuing it. Some of his rhetoric probably is intended to defuse criticisms that he “lost” Eastern Europe by pointing to a brighter future. There is, however, an element of optimism in Shevardnadze’s long-range thinking about Europe that appears genuine. He is realistic enough to acknowledge that there is virtually no popular support for socialism in Eastern or Western Europe, and that reliance on the old methods—intervention by the Red Army—was not an option in 1989. At the same time, however, Shevardnadze has suggested privately and hinted publicly that if the Soviet Union manages to surmount its current “time of troubles” and succeed with *perestroika*, it is possible that in time the USSR and the countries of Eastern Europe could be drawn together by a new and as-yet undefined form of socialism. This in turn would open the way to closer ties with Western Europe in what he expects will be a united and largely demilitarized continent.

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<sup>26</sup>Jan Reifenberg, “Moskau befürwortet Abzug fremder Truppen aus Ost- und Westeuropa in fünf Jahren,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, January 30, 1990.

## V. THE MFA, THE MILITARY, AND THE NEW POLITICAL SYSTEM

The outcome of Shevardnadze's differences with the military is likely to hinge on the fate of the political reform underway in the Soviet Union. As one of Gorbachev's closest political advisers, Shevardnadze has been an active participant in this reform. He has used his position as foreign minister to press for domestic change, in part by invoking international agreements and "common human values" that he claims must be applied to the Soviet Union. In turn, he has exploited changes in the Soviet political system to tighten his own grip on foreign policy and to encroach on the traditional domain of the military.

At the 19th party conference in June 1988, Gorbachev proposed the creation of an "effective mechanism" to ensure the renewal of the political system. He called for the election of a new Congress of People's Deputies that would in turn elect a new Supreme Soviet to replace the existing rubberstamp body. Observers generally agreed that Gorbachev's objective was to increase popular participation in and thereby support for *perestroika* and to create a power base for himself outside the CPSU.

Shevardnadze was quick to express support for the proposed changes and to elaborate on their relevance for foreign policy. In his speech to the July 1988 MFA conference he called for the "democratization of decisionmaking in foreign policy" and referred favorably to unnamed comrades who proposed "introducing into the practice of the USSR Supreme Soviet open hearings on particular international problems and replies by the Minister and other Ministry officials to unofficial requests by deputies. . . ." <sup>1</sup> He recommended three areas in which military decisions should be placed "under the control of the higher nationwide elective bodies:" the use of armed force outside the Soviet Union, defense development plans, and "openness of military budgets."

Gorbachev's proposals for the creation of a new parliamentary system were not realized without a bitter struggle within the party. This began in September 1988, when Gorbachev convened an emergency meeting of the Central Committee. Shevardnadze cut short his stay at the UN General Assembly in New York to return to Moscow for the

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<sup>1</sup>IA, No. 10, 1988, p. 7.

plenum.<sup>2</sup> The meeting resulted in the abolition of twelve of twenty Central Committee departments and their replacement with six commissions, each headed by a party secretary. The outcome of these changes was to deprive Ligachev of his power base by in effect dissolving the Secretariat as a collective body. Ligachev lost his power to oversee ideology and foreign policy, while Yakovlev was named to head the newly formed International Policy Commission.<sup>3</sup>

The shakeup in the party apparatus cleared the way to the election of a new Congress of People's Deputies in the spring of 1989 and the election by that congress of a new Supreme Soviet. The Supreme Soviet was assigned sweeping defense and foreign policy powers, including the authority to appoint the Defense Council, replace the higher command of the armed forces, "define principal defense and national security measures," call a general or partial mobilization, declare war, and "be responsible for decisions on using Soviet military contingents should it be necessary to meet international treaty-based commitments to maintain peace and security."<sup>4</sup> To help in the discharge of these tasks, the Supreme Soviet established an International Affairs Committee and a Committee for Defense and State Security Questions.<sup>5</sup>

Although in theory Shevardnadze surrendered some of his power to the new parliament, in practice his authority over foreign and defense policy was enhanced, as the military and the KGB were placed under stricter and more hostile parliamentary supervision than the MFA. He did not stand for election to the congress or attempt to become a member of the Supreme Soviet, but he clearly enjoyed a relatively favorable position with respect to both bodies. This was borne out in late June, when the parliament and its committees for the first time exercised their right to confirm governmental appointments. Shevardnadze was unanimously endorsed by the International Affairs Committee and the Supreme Soviet.

Defense Minister Yazov won the unanimous endorsement of the Defense and State Security Committee. But in the final vote in the plenary session, only 256 deputies voted in favor of Yazov's appointment, while 77 voted against and 66 abstained. He thus fell short of the required 272 votes needed to confirm in the 542-member body. Gorbachev managed to rescue the confirmation by a strong personal

<sup>2</sup>"Kremlin Meets for Crisis Talks," *The Times of London*, September 29, 1988.

<sup>3</sup>Alexander Rahr, "USSR: Who Is In Charge of the Party Apparatus?" *RFE/RL Daily Report*, April 3, 1989.

<sup>4</sup>TASS, May 24, 1989, in FBIS-SU, May 24, 1989.

<sup>5</sup>See the interview with A. I. Lukianov, *Izvestiia*, June 9, 1989.



appeal and by pushing through a last-minute rule change that allowed nominees to win with less than an absolute majority of votes.<sup>6</sup> The head of the KGB, Vladimir Kriuchkov, fared much better than Yazov, although not as well as Shevardnadze. He too won the unanimous endorsement of the committee, but was approved by the parliament as a whole with only 6 votes against and 26 abstentions.<sup>7</sup>

More telling than the numerical differences in the votes was the treatment accorded each of the appointees by the deputies. Whereas Shevardnadze came in for praise, Yazov faced hostile questioning from delegates, some of whom were junior officers who had been elected by defeating senior commanders.<sup>8</sup> A lieutenant criticized Yazov for the involvement of the military in suppressing the nationalist demonstrations in Georgia, and a lieutenant colonel criticized him for maintaining sports and political indoctrination programs while cutting training.<sup>9</sup>

Notwithstanding his initial successes in reforming the political system, Gorbachev only partially achieved his objectives. He continued to run into strong resistance from the party apparatus, chiefly over domestic issues. In the summer of 1989 there were numerous reports of dissatisfaction in the party with the new parliamentary system. At the July plenum of the Central Committee, several members of the Politburo, including Prime Minister Ryzhkov, expressed concern that Gorbachev was neglecting the party apparatus and concentrating too much on the new state institutions. These criticisms even gave rise to rumors that Gorbachev was considering relinquishing his post as General Secretary and turning the job over to Shevardnadze.<sup>10</sup>

While the ongoing resistance of the party was a problem, an even greater challenge was the Supreme Soviet itself, which failed to perform as Gorbachev had expected. From the earliest sessions of the Congress of People's Deputies, representatives from the Baltic republics pursued their goal of national independence. A small but disparate group of progressive deputies, the most notable of whom was Andrei Sakharov, used the parliament to criticize Gorbachev for being too slow

<sup>6</sup>David Remnick, "Supreme Soviet Bows to Gorbachev, Renames Yazov as Defense Minister," *Washington Post*, July 4, 1989. 143 deputies were absent and did not vote.

<sup>7</sup>David Remnick, "KGB Chief Wins Reappointment from Legislature," *Washington Post*, July 15, 1989.

<sup>8</sup>The commander of Soviet forces in East Germany, for example, had been defeated by a lieutenant colonel calling for a radical reform of the military, including abolition of the draft. Dawn Mann and Julia Wishnevsky, "USSR-Composition of the Congress of People's Deputies," *RFE/RL Daily Report*, April 20, 1989.

<sup>9</sup>Bill Keller, "Young Officers in Attack on Soviet Defense Chief," *New York Times*, July 4, 1989. See also Yazov's interview in *Moscow News*, No. 29, 1989.

<sup>10</sup>"Could Gorbachev Make Shevardnadze General Secretary?" *RFE/RL Daily Report*, August 10, 1989.

and timid in changing the system, while the majority of the deputies proved resistant to change and clearly remained under the influence of the conservative local party organizations. Gorbachev thus faced vocal and highly visible opposition from the "left," which helped to undermine his popular support, as well as opposition from the "right," which undercut the very reforms needed to satisfy public demands.

Disillusioned with the Supreme Soviet and faced with deepening economic and nationality problems, in early 1990 Gorbachev engineered yet another major change in the political system. In March the Congress of People's Deputies approved Gorbachev's plans for the establishment of a presidential system. The constitutional amendments granted the president sweeping powers, including the right to declare martial and civil emergencies and to issue executive orders.

As Gorbachev has managed to concentrate power in his own hands and establish a political base outside the party, Shevardnadze generally has benefited. Nonetheless, alternative power centers have the potential to challenge Shevardnadze on foreign and defense issues. The Central Committee's International Policy Commission remains a potential rival. It includes active and retired military officers, notably Moiseev and Akhromeev, and has an advisory role in the conduct of foreign policy and oversees the International Department. That department has a small disarmament section which, as has been seen, has already clashed with the MFA on arms control issues. It is led by Valentin Falin, a former ambassador to West Germany who has been a leading participant in the Soviet discussion of German reunification.

Another potential check on Shevardnadze is the parliament and its International Affairs Committee. So far, Shevardnadze has attempted to work with the Supreme Soviet and to use it as a forum to promote his policies. In September the MFA announced the formation of a new Department for Relations with the Supreme Soviet and Interparliamentary Cooperation. In October, Shevardnadze delivered a report on foreign policy to a plenary session of the parliament.<sup>11</sup> On the same day, the MFA submitted to the International Affairs Committee a detailed written report on Soviet foreign policy in the 1985-1989 period.<sup>12</sup> The following month Shevardnadze appeared before the committee to answer questions about the report, where he was warmly received. Nonetheless, it is too early to conclude that the International Affairs Committee will remain a docile instrument in the MFA's hands.

<sup>11</sup>*Pravda*, October 24, 1989.

<sup>12</sup>"The Foreign Policy and Diplomatic Activity of the USSR. A Survey Prepared by the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs," *IA*, No. 1, 1990, pp. 5-111.

A third potential source of resistance to Shevardnadze is the KGB, whose power was enhanced at the September 1989 Central Committee plenum with the promotion of Vladimir Kriuchkov to full membership on the Politburo. Kriuchkov affirmed a certain role for the KGB in foreign policy, but generally deferred to Shevardnadze: "Once in a while we initiate one or another foreign policy move. Still, I think we have but one arbiter, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, headed by a man with that feel for the new which is so essential nowadays."<sup>13</sup> Kriuchkov's admiration for Shevardnadze may not be universally shared within the KGB, however, which has shown signs of restiveness over Gorbachev's policies. In March 1990 a group of members of the KGB's central apparatus addressed an appeal to Gorbachev and the parliament, asking them to halt the disintegration of the Soviet fatherland and to end the attacks on such sacred symbols as Lenin, the October revolution, and the armed forces.<sup>14</sup> Kriuchkov made his career in the foreign intelligence side of the KGB—hence his relative sophistication about international affairs and his affinity for Shevardnadze—and it is not clear how much prestige he has with those in the organization who have spent their careers combating domestic dissent.

In view of these sources of rivalry, it is understandable that Shevardnadze has not managed to win all of the policy battles in which he has been engaged since 1985. As has been seen, he criticized the military for its slowness in formulating a new defensive doctrine, and suffered at least a partial defeat on the issue of the military budget and the data exchange with NATO. Nor did Shevardnadze succeed in realizing all of his ambitious proposals for reform of the decisionmaking process. In his speech to the July 1988 MFA conference, he floated the idea of a "Disarmament Department" to which would be transferred "the entire gamut of problems pertaining to chemical weapons, nuclear tests and so on."<sup>15</sup> No such department has been created. Nor has the MFA obtained, at least formally, the right to "verify" innovations in defense development "to determine whether they correspond juridically to existing international agreements and to stated political positions."<sup>16</sup>

As recently as early 1990 Shevardnadze noted that the MFA had "problems with certain central television offices." Breaking with the traditional Soviet reticence on the question of media policy, he charged that the mass media and especially television were opposed to more than purely formal coverage of diplomacy, and revealed that unknown

<sup>13</sup>*New Times*, No. 32, 1989.

<sup>14</sup>Alexander Rahr, "KGB Attack on Reform and Gorbachev," *RFE/RL Daily Report*, March 1990.

<sup>15</sup>*JA*, No. 10, 1988, p. 31.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 19.

officials—presumably in the Central Committee apparatus—had forbidden a Soviet television crew to accompany Shevardnadze on his trip to the Ottawa Open Skies conference.<sup>17</sup>

There also were indications of ongoing military resistance to the dismantling of the Krasnoyarsk radar that Shevardnadze announced at the Supreme Soviet in October 1989. At least one retired general argued on cost-saving grounds that the radar should be preserved and turned into an early-warning installation,<sup>18</sup> thereby prompting *Literaturnaia gazeta* and *Moscow News* to hint at military insubordination and to ask why the Ministry of Defense had not responded to Shevardnadze's questions about the origins of the radar.<sup>19</sup> More importantly, Soviet negotiators in numerous East-West forums began to slow the pace of progress and to harden positions in ways that suggested to many Western observers growing military influence over policy.<sup>20</sup>

Perhaps most significant was the change in Shevardnadze's own remarks on the military. While he defended himself from charges that he had endangered Soviet security through unilateral concessions, he did not repeat the sweeping condemnations of 1988. By early 1990, Shevardnadze had in fact joined with Gorbachev in what was clearly a broad effort by the political leadership to placate the military. Along with four other members of the Politburo (Vorotnikov, Medvedev, Zaikov, and Kriuchkov) he attended the February 22 ceremonies marking the 72nd anniversary of the Soviet Armed Forces. This was a break from the past, in which Shevardnadze and Politburo members other than Zaikov stayed away from such occasions.<sup>21</sup> In another gesture toward the military, in April Defense Minister Yazov was promoted to the rank of marshal. Overall, however, the MFA remains in a strong position relative to the military leadership, and is well placed to influence the outcome of future policy debates.

<sup>17</sup>*Ogonek*, No. 11, 1990.

<sup>18</sup>"Black for White" (interview with Major General Boris Surikov), *Moscow News*, No. 11, 1990.

<sup>19</sup>Iuri Kornilov, "Taking a Hammer to a Secret Project," *Literaturnaia gazeta*, No. 12, 1990.

<sup>20</sup>Paul Lewis, "Soviet Position at 'Open Skies' Talks Leaves West Wondering About Rifts in Moscow," *New York Times*, February 25, 1990; Michael R. Gordon, "Soviet Military Is Reported To Reassert Itself at Kremlin," *New York Times*, April 13, 1990.

<sup>21</sup>Alexander Rahr, "Gorbachev Moves To Placate and Preempt Disgruntled Military," *RFE/RL Daily Report*, March 1, 1990.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

As the political and economic crisis in the Soviet Union drags on, policy differences between Shevardnadze and important members of the Soviet military leadership are likely to persist. As has been seen, MFA-military differences were largely below the surface in the first two years of Shevardnadze's tenure as foreign minister. In 1987-1988 they burst into public view, with Shevardnadze taking the offensive against the armed forces. With the collapse of the Soviet position in Eastern Europe, Shevardnadze was put on the defensive, as critics in the military as well as influential civilians openly questioned the results of his policies.

MFA-military differences will be important to U.S. policymakers for two reasons. First, they raise questions regarding compliance with and the possible reversibility of many of the steps taken by the Soviet military. As yet, there is little evidence of Bonapartism or military insubordination in the Soviet Union. However reluctantly, the generals obey the civilian leadership. Nonetheless, in circumstances in which the Soviet military is being forced to take steps that it strongly opposes, the possibility cannot be excluded that it may violate the letter or the spirit of the policies instituted by the civilian leadership. This possibility would seem to be particularly relevant to the full implementation of the new declaratory doctrine (defensive restructuring), the provision of information, and compliance with difficult-to-verify arms control agreements.

Second, the unpopularity among the military of many of the policies favored by Shevardnadze and the MFA means that their continuation will depend very much on the political fortunes of Gorbachev. As has been seen, Shevardnadze has been careful to align his views closely to those of Gorbachev. Each radical step forward in the MFA's articulation of a new Soviet foreign and defense policy and each escalation of MFA-military conflict has followed a Gorbachev-inspired event: the May 1986 speech to the MFA, the June 1987 plenum, the June 1988 party conference, and the December 1988 speech to the UN General Assembly. After each of these events, Shevardnadze has used MFA conferences, his own speeches and interviews, and controversial articles in MFA-controlled journals not only to associate himself with Gorbachev's latest initiatives, but also to push slightly beyond the limits of what Gorbachev himself declared and possibly intended.

If Gorbachev is forced to rein in his reform program, Shevardnadze will have no choice but to follow suit. Similarly, if Gorbachev were removed from office, Shevardnadze probably would have great difficulty in retaining his position. It is more difficult to say what would happen to Shevardnadze and his policies if Gorbachev were replaced by (or forced to share power with) radical reformers such as Yeltsin. As a leading reformer himself whose expertise in foreign affairs is widely respected, Shevardnadze could play a role in a reformist or even post-Communist regime. But in the last analysis he too is a man of the *apparatus*, and this might count against him in a radically changed political system. In any case, over the long run Soviet foreign and defense policy is likely to be determined as much by domestic developments and the fate of *perestroika* as by the evolution of Shevardnadze's views on the international system and the requirements of Soviet security.